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THEODOR FONTANE

(1819-1898)

THEODOR FONTANE has been strangely neglected outside Germany, and in English-speaking countries in particular. Yet his work stands as a milestone in the history of the German novel which in itself is comparatively poor in personalities and achievement. The reason for this neglect can be found, to some extent at least, in the claim that Fontane is a "regionalist" confining his subject matter to his immediate environment—Berlin and the countryside of the "sandy", lake-infested, pine-timbered march of Brandenburg. Even if this were so, and the complaint is by no means well grounded, this reason for his neglect would not be valid in itself. Ibsen's Norwegian "milieu", Mauriac's predilection for the scenery in and around Bordeaux—not to mention Zola's and Proust's insistence on the French capital have never been grounds for disqualification. The mention of these writers does not imply that Fontane should be placed on an equal plane with the greatest of nineteenth century novelists. Even German critics claim only *Effi Briest* (1895, translated into English by W. A. Cooper in 1913) for *Weltliteratur*, and this work is no doubt his crowning achievement, although *Frau Jenny Treibel* (1892) and *Der Stechlin* (1898) have equally outstanding qualities. But it is Fontane's place in the history of the German novel which needs defining first of all. With the exception of Gottfried Keller's first version of *Der grüne Heinrich* (1854) and Stifter's *Nachsommer* (1857) there is really nothing comparable to Fontane's novelistic work in the German writing

orbit since Goethe's *Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre* (1796) and *Wahlverwandtschaften* (1809). The art of the *Novelle* had, indeed, been developed to a high degree since Heinrich von Kleist and this kind of prose narrative had been raised to so specific a German form within the wider range of the "short story" that it constitutes one of the highlights of German literary achievement in the nineteenth century, being more consistent in standard than the drama (Kleist, Grillparzer, Hebbel, Hauptmann) and far more than the novel. It may be said that the peculiar development of German society in the nineteenth century, its seclusion, its fragmentation politically, its retardation, lacked the breadth and width of foundation on which the great novelists of France, England and Russia were able to build. Thus Keller and Stifter rose to the stature of novelists only spasmodically whereas the other chief prose-writers of "poetic realism"—again a specific German phenomenon—(E. T. A. Hoffmann and Möricke, Gotthelf, Droste-Hülshoff, C. F. Meyer, Heyse and Raabe) perfect the *Novelle*. Heyse had novelistic ambitions at times, but failed dismally; Raabe, of whose modernity Professor Barker Fairley has reminded us recently,¹ left no marks with his novels, he remained an *Einzelgänger*, whereas Thomas Mann is unthinkable without his major German predecessor, Theodor Fontane. Fontane himself should be judged by the standard of the German novel between Goethe and himself.

What we see between these two—and we deal with an interval of 75 years—is poor. The romantic novel (Novalis, Tieck, Arnim, Brentano, Eichendorff) lacks form and intensity and does not actually deserve the term. Jean Paul, a beautiful stylist when enjoyed in well assorted doses such as Stefan George's anthology provides, is so diffused and eccentric that with him the German novel landed in a *cul de sac*. Immermann valiantly attempted the creation of a *Zeitroman* (*Die Epigonen* 1836, *Münchhausen*, 1838), but he got hopelessly entangled in the trappings of Romantic sentimentality which smothered his sense for the contemporary. The monstrosities of *Das Junge Deutschland* whose authors (Gutzkow, Laube) aspired to throw the contemporary social situation on vast canvasses, again were so formless and in content so confused that they became museum pieces as soon as the printing presses had stopped producing

¹ Barker Fairley, "The Modernity of Raabe", in *German Studies presented to L. A. Willoughby*, Oxford 1952, pp. 66-81.

them. The historical or "professorial" novel of Freytag, Dahn and Ebers and of the earlier and much more gifted Willibald Alexis, all sailing in the wake of Sir Walter Scott (as did, in many respects, Immermann) quickly receded to the confines of the sixth- and fifth-form boy. There remains Gustav Freytag's *Soll und Haben* (1864), generally hailed as a landmark in the history of the German novel, and as a gateway to German realism. But those who continually quote the motto for the novel that it "soll das Volk da suchen, wo es noch in seiner Tüchtigkeit zu finden ist, nämlich bei der Arbeit" (this had been a demand put forward by the literary historian Julian Schmidt) rarely inquire whether and how Freytag succeeded. The rumblings of Dickens' social conscience are heard here faintly, although they are overwhelmed in Freytag's grave and pedestrian style and absorbed in his provincial outlook.

The *romancier par excellence* of the period immediately prior to Fontane, i.e. of the sixties and seventies, was Friedrich Spielhagen (1829-1911). His novels give an interesting insight into the conditions of his time (roughly from 1840 to 1875), which makes them, to some degree, a historical source. Many of them are thinly veiled *romans à clef* such as *In Reih und Glied* (1866) whose hero is Ferdinand Lasalle in disguise. *Sturmflut* which like many of his other works was translated into English immediately following its publication in Germany, is his most impressive achievement. Its subject matter is the shattering economic crisis of 1873 to 1875 which descended like a blight on the newly founded Empire. *Sturmflut* appeared in 1877, one year before Fontane's first novel. It is in comparison with his most celebrated contemporary novelist that Fontane's stature rises to heights unknown in the history of the German novel between Goethe and Thomas Mann. Spielhagen was the preacher of a politico-philosophical doctrine, a humanitarian and idealistic Liberalism which he interpolated into and imposed upon his work in the militant way of a zealot. He felt he had an educational mission and was by no means unsuccessful in pressing it home. Fontane was a keen and sceptical observer of his time, but he never defined his attitude in his artistic work. Whereas Spielhagen threw a veil over his contemporary criticism, Fontane set his fictional characters firmly within the framework of the time, and the great-and-small figures of German contemporary life appear before his tribunal as actual actors; i.e. if he wishes to discuss Bismarck, he discusses him

and not some illusory character. Being—in contrast to Spielhagen—anti-middle class at heart he was the first German writer to give an objective, well measured analysis of contemporary German society, but treating at the same time general problems of convention and personal relations of a super-regional and super-national character with a deep psychological insight and a frankness which was shocking to his contemporaries. Spielhagen was deadly serious and developed an unbearable bathos which gave his style, nourished on Schiller's dramas and ballads (not on his historical or philosophical prose) a pompous and overbearing character, highly incongruous with his realistic setting. Spielhagen in fact still suffered from the Romantic, or pseudo-Romantic malaise. Fontane, in contrast, possessed that superior irony which pervades every situation and character and raises his narrative far above the level of sentimentality. None before him had developed such mastery of the dialogue, which became the mainstay of his frequently and intentionally meagre plots. Spielhagen's situations are permeated with sensational and spectacular features—(again a heritage of common-place Romanticism) and therefore border on the ridiculous and certainly the sickly sentimental. In contrast, Fontane stands out through his matter-of-factness and his unsentimental approach to situation and character; yet kindness always is visible in his satire, for instance, to give one supreme example, when exposing sentimentality in all its aspects in the figure of Frau Kommerzienrätin Jenny Treibel, née Bürstenbinder. Spielhagen, courageous in his contemporaneity and his proclamation of a doctrine officially frowned upon, was always a second class writer with a third class style and it is almost touching how he admitted this to Fontane himself. When he had read *Effi Briest* and discovered that he had used the same source as Fontane for one of his own novels (*Zum Zeitvertreib* 1897—one should note the title) he gave the prize to Fontane without reservation and asked him to refrain from reading his own work. Moreover he wondered whether he was a writer at all or not rather "ein interloper der Literatur trotz des massenhaften Zeugs, das ich geschrieben habe".² In an essay on *Effi Briest* he compared the work with Goethe's *Die Wahlverwandtschaften*.

To sum up: Fontane's novelistic work is the climax of Realism in the German novel, realism as it had been prac-

² Auction Catalogue, No. 35, H. Meyer & Ernst, *Theodor Fontane und August Kotzebue*, Berlin, October 1933, p. 105.

tised in Europe since Flaubert. It had the characteristics of its style—restraint, detachment despite lucid criticism of social environment, understanding irony without exaggeration and a humanism tempered by scepticism yet not without temperate optimism for the future. He even reaches right into the impressionist form of style in that he loosens his plots, fills them with a veritable store of anecdotes and enriches them with a mass of detailed observations while ease is given to his diction by the light flicker of the atmosphere. This looseness of style, this anecdotal way of filling in the plot, this characterisation out of the dialogue may be considered weaknesses, but they give Fontane a particular charm which Thomas Mann defined so ingeniously in 1910:

“Es ist etwas unbedingt Zauberhaftes um seinen Stil. Mir persönlich wenigstens sei das Bekenntnis erlaubt, dass kein Schriftsteller der Vergangenheit und Gegenwart mir die Sympathie und Dankbarkeit, dies unmittelbare und instinktive Entzücken, diese unmittelbare Erheiterung, Erwärmung, Befriedigung erweckt, die ich bei jedem Vers, jeder Briefzeile, jedem Dialogfetzchen von ihm empfinde. Diese bei aller behaglichen Breite so leichte, so lichte Prosa, hat mit ihrer heimlichen Neigung zum Balladesken, ihren zugleich mundgerechten und vermässigen Abbreviaturen etwas bequemes Gehobenes, sie besitzt, bei scheinbarer Lässigkeit, eine Haltung und Behaltlichkeit, eine innere Form, wie sie wohl nur nach langer poetischer Übung denkbar ist . . .”³

The unique phenomenon with Fontane is, indeed, as Thomas Mann calls it, his long “poetical” training. It took him fourteen years to write, amidst other works, his first novel, at the same time his longest, *Vor dem Sturm*, a broad depiction of Prussian society prior to the outbreak of the wars of liberation—faintly reflecting and perhaps moulded on *War and Peace*. When he finished it in 1878 he was almost sixty years of age. Before it had gone almost forty years of training, consciously or unconsciously, for his true calling. In his twenties and thirties the little fame he had gained rested entirely on his poetry: ballads in the ancient Anglo-Scottish style on which he moulded his own on Prussian history. Twenty further years he spent as a journalist, his main subject of reporting being English politics and life and letters as he had spent three periods in England, the longest from 1855 to 1859. The outcome was, apart from his

³ Thomas Mann, “Der alte Fontane”, in *Rede und Antwort*, Berlin 1922, p. 85.

routine articles, three books on England and Scotland. His English sojourns were of great importance for his further development and more research in the different aspects of it is still required, in particular how far English novelists such as Thackeray and Trollope have left their mark on his style and his outlook.⁴ Having sharpened his powers of observation in his wanderings through the British Isles under exacting financial conditions, he explored the March of Brandenburg and produced in five volumes: *Wanderungen durch die Mark Brandenburg* (1865-1882) and *Fünf Schlösser* (1889), a unique collection of geographical, historical and social detail about towns, villages, mansion houses, families, monasteries, and the countryside, spiced with numerous anecdotes and thus building up a veritable storehouse of knowledge about his contemporary society and its historical evolution. Again out of personal observation grew the books about the three Prussian wars (1864-71) which he covered as a war correspondent of the conservative *Kreuzzeitung*. Four volumes alone deal with the war against France and its aftermath, books which met with considerable opposition for having been too fair to the French. Further there is a large amount of literary criticism written when he was theatre critic of the liberal *Vossische Zeitung* (1870-1889). Not until 1876 was he free from the fetters of professional assignments. Twenty years of gathering in the harvest from seed planted long ago resulted in 16 novels written when he was between the age of 58 and 78 and, in addition, a number of short stories and three autobiographical works.

If in the beginning of this survey a lack of interest in Fontane outside Germany has been noted, it is only fair to say that Germany herself has administered Fontane's heritage with considerable slackness. His youngest son Friedrich (1863-1941), himself a publisher, issued the only authoritative textual edition of his father's works, between 1905 and 1910.⁵ It was by no means complete and Friedrich had never placed his father's unpublished manuscripts at the disposal of scholars for a critical

⁴ D. Barlow's article "Fontane's English Journeys" in *German Life and Letters*, VI (1952-53), pp. 167-77 mentions Trollope casually. The travel books on England and Scotland were published and edited by Friedrich Fontane, Berlin, 1938.

⁵ *Gesammelte Werke von Theodor Fontane*, Berlin 1905-1910. The first series contains the poems, novels and short-stories (10 volumes), the second series (11 volumes) contains descriptive and autobiographical works and 4 volumes of letters.

edition, nor did any other publisher venture upon a complete and critical edition after 1928, when Fontane's works became free of copyright. After the death of Fontane's second son, Theodor, in 1933, the *Nachlass* was put up for auction (see note 2) and most of it was bought by the Province of Brandenburg, which founded a *Theodor Fontane Archiv*. The Hitler period was no fertile soil for either the publication of a critical edition or for Fontane studies, as the *Nachlass* revealed an attitude towards certain aspects of Prussian life and German historical development, especially in the unpublished letters and diaries of the latest period, that was not pleasing to the *Reichsschrifttumskammer*. So he was left severely alone with the exception of some valuable source publications mostly of the earlier periods.⁶ The post-war period is now faced with the fact that most of the Archive's treasures did not survive the battle of Berlin in 1945.

Fontane's letters are an indispensable corollary to his work, for in them much more than in his work we find the key to his personality; and without a grasp of the personality the true meaning of his work with its many allusions and innuendoes cannot be understood. At least in the case of a man of Fontane's "objectivity" who, as mentioned before, conceals his own views from the public and who knows so well how to make two sides of an argument plausible. And Fontane's letters — like his diaries — have had the sad fate of being severely censored by cautious editors as far as they were published at all. All the more welcome is the most important post-war publication on Fontane, 276 letters to his friend, George Friedländer (1834-1914), a judge at the county court in Schmiedeberg in the Silesian hills.⁷ They cover the period from 1884 to 1898, i.e. the last and most creative period of Fontane's life. Friedländer himself had their publication in mind as early as 1910, but he was almost blackmailed into abstention. But, as the editor, Professor Schreinert of Göttingen says, it was fortunate that the plan did not come to fruition as it would have been impossible at the time to print

⁶ e.g. *Theodor Fontane und Bernhard von Lepel (1818-1885), Ein Freundschftsbriefwechsel*. Ed. by J. Petersen, München, 1940, 2 vols. *Th. Fontane, Heiteres Darüberstehen. Familienbriefe. Neue Folge*. Ed. by Friedrich Fontane, Berlin 1937. *Th. Fontane, Briefe an die Freunde. Letzte Auslese.*, ed. by Friedrich Fontane and Hermann Fricke, Berlin 1943, 2 vols. 89 *ungedruckte Briefe und Handschriften von Th. Fontane*, ed. by R. v. Kehler, Berlin 1936.

⁷ *Theodor Fontane. Briefe an Georg Friedländer*. Herausgegeben und erläutert von Kurt Schreinert. Quelle & Meyer, Heidelberg, 1954, 400 pp.

them *in extenso*. There were among their pages too many "*schlimme Stellen*" pertaining to personalities, social conditions and public affairs. Friedländer's own letters to Fontane were mostly destroyed by Emilie Fontane, the writer's wife (who died in 1902), the few which were preserved fell victim to the 1945 disaster. *Habent sua fata libelli*. The manuscripts now available to us were brought to Western Germany by Friedländer's daughter, Elizabeth (who died aged 75 in 1952) when—destitute—she had to leave the parental home in the Riesengebirge in 1950. All this throws light on the chaotic conditions of archives and private documents in which eastern Germany abounded, also on the losses sustained for literary research by the reluctance of their owners to make them available in good time.

These letters confirm in many ways, what could be guessed from letters previously published, that Fontane was by no means the serene and superior character which he appears to be in his works. On the contrary: he is upset and submerged by day to day affairs, he suffers, even in his old age, from the severe defects of his parental home and a misspent adolescence; he suffers from the fact that he had no education to speak of and lacked academic training and the social graces—and connections—linked with it, at least in the early nineteenth century. It is rather astonishing to observe that even during the period under review he seemed to have read very little although admittedly he had some twenty works in preparation and was moreover a sick man. Yet it is surprising that, for instance, he does not even write correctly the title of Pestalozzi's most famous novel (*Lienhard und Gertrud*) which he mentions as "Gertrud und Linart (oder Linhardt)", although he borrows from it as soon as he receives it for his novel *Quitt* (cf. letter of 20 August 1886). Fontane thus suffered from a social inferiority complex which pursued him throughout his life and which he ascribed not entirely without justification to his defective education. There is, no doubt, a marked dichotomy in his personality; bitterness about insufficient public recognition, about the reserve of the nobility towards him, about his financial and domestic conditions, added to this his constant ailments, make him extremely sensitive, sometimes cynical. In fact, there is a certain instability in his views of life, a relativity of outlook which is very typical for the period of Impressionism.

"Personen, denen irgend etwas absolut feststeht, sind keine Genossen für mich; nichts steht mehr fest, auch nicht einmal

in Moral- und Gesinnungsfragen und am wenigsten in sogenannten Tatsachen" (7 November 1893; p. 239).

This attitude provides a key to Fontane's work, an explanation for his particular kind of "objectivity" which from his letters might appear to be but an unprincipled or resigned relativism, or one acquired by experience. However, Fontane's peculiar art of letter-writing, his openness for all impressions, — those around him or springing from contemporary events, or from passages in his correspondent's letter, — is such that it would be unfair to pin him down to any particular statement. For with all the pettiness and even querulousness which creep into these communications, (they are probably the most intimate we have of him, certainly as far as friends are concerned), there is the redeeming factor of frankness and honesty and heartsearching. An autobiographical passage from a letter 4 weeks earlier than the one quoted, may show this:

"Without private means, without family support, without proper education and knowledge, without robust health I have entered life, equipped with nothing but a poetic talent and a badly cut pair of trousers (always sagging at the knees), and now imagine how I must inevitably have fared in accordance with certain inexorable laws of Nature. I might add in accordance with certain inexorable laws of Prussia, which are much worse than those of Nature. There were of course, good moments, moments of consolation, of hope, and of a steadily growing self-confidence. But, all told, I dare say I have always been exposed to slights, doubts, shrugs of the shoulder and condescending smiles. Always, even when I was somebody, even when I marched at the head in a particular field (the ballad), I was under suspicion, and others who were nothing but crocks were preferred to me. I cannot possibly say that I have borne all this with indifference; I have suffered from it; however, I may also say, I have not suffered from it *very* much. The reason for this was and still is that I have always had a very keen sense for *facts*. I have always taken life as I found it and I have submitted to it. That is to say, submitted outwardly; not in my heart."⁸

A passage like this, and there are scores of them in these letters, goes to show how wrong the view is, so frequently pro-

⁸ 3 October 1893; p. 235. This passage is one of the few from the letters to Friedländer which had been published before (*Ges. Werke*, II, vol. II. 308) and Thomas Mann quoted from it (op. cit. p. 73f). Fontane continues with a terrific attack on the "established" powers in our "good land Prussia": Money, aristocracy, officers, assessors and professors, to whom one has to submit, into which life has to "shunt" one correctly. Woe to him, he says, who is shunted on to the wrong track.

pounded by scholars that Fontane's supreme aim is to defend *Ordnung* and even contemporary *Ordnung*. What is correct is that he was not a fighting man. He keeps his views, on the whole, to himself. In his letters he practises cold self-exposition, he handles the surgeon's knife which sometimes is the knife of revenge, and dissects more openly, more informally, and far more subjectively than in his artistically rounded works, the phenomena of contemporary life: the small and unimportant (though not insignificant) ones such as concern the circle in Schmiedeberg around which Friedländer's letters move with obvious monotony, the atmosphere of Berlin or of the watering places to which he retires in the summer, but also society itself, the state of Prussia, of Germany, of the Empire, the part Jewry plays in modern life, the state of art, literature and the press, and, above all, the two phenomena which never give him peace: the state, influence and power of the Prussian nobility, and the state of Protestant christianity of the orthodox, north German brand. No doubt we find in this penetrating criticism the heritage of his family's French origin, the strains of the Gascon even with a tendency to *gasconner*.⁹

Fontane, the sceptic, even the agnostic – he calls himself “ganz unchristlich” – is nevertheless searching constantly for something genuinely religious which carries him above the hypocrisy of the clergy and the lip-service of the bourgeoisie, above their “pettiness” towards God. He instinctively feels that the social apathy of contemporary society is the crux of the matter and he sees vaguely a solution in the pious life and active charity of the Moravian Brethren and the Christian-social movement. “Mammonism is the lowest form of human existence”, he proclaims. This new form of Christianity, he counters, “ist das Einzige, was mich noch interessiert, das Einzige, dem ich eine Berechtigung und eine Zukunft zuspreche”, (p. 294). This passage then throws unequivocal light on the figure – so much discussed – of Pastor Lorenzen in *Der Stechlin*. No doubt can remain that Fontane identifies himself with Lorenzen who is suspected – at the burial scene of the splendid old Junker – of belonging to the radical Göhre wing of the Christian Social Movement, Pastor Paul Göhre being the first German Christian Socialist of the time.¹⁰

⁹ See p. 156 and letter 221 (p. 258f). He pronounced his name in two syllables with the stress on the first and nasalizing the second.

¹⁰ cf. *Der Stechlin*, ed. Drömer, 1952, p. 1055, also Lorenzen's sermon. G.

Politically, we see the change that came over Fontane develop to ever greater proportions. He apologises for writing so "maliciously" (bissig) as it seems to contradict his nature as well as his past. "Ich kann es aber nicht beklagen, dass noch in meinen alten Tagen solche Wandlung über mich gekommen ist. Alles, was jetzt bei uns obenauf ist . . ., ist mir grenzenlos zuwider: dieser beschränkte, selbstsüchtige, rappschige (greedy) Adel, diese verlogene, bornierte Kirchlichkeit, dieser ewige Reserve-Offizier, dieser greuliche Byzantinismus" (2 November 1896, p. 305). His broad, detailed and yet fair characterisation of the Kaiser (p. 309f) is astounding for its modernity (e.g. "er will nicht das Unmögliche, so doch das Höchstgefährliche, mit falscher Ausrüstung, mit unausreichenden Mitteln . . . Wir brauchen einen ganz andren Unterbau.") and significant for Fontane's own patriotism and his attitude of the new forces at work. He sees battles ahead which, however, do not worry him as they will be a historical necessity:

"Mein Hass gegen alles, was die neue Zeit aufhält, ist in einem beständigen Wachsen und die Möglichkeit, ja die Wahrscheinlichkeit, dass dem Sieg des Neuen eine furchtbare Schlacht vorausgehen muss, kann mich nicht abhalten, diesen Sieg des Neuen zu wünschen. Unsinn und Lüge drücken zu schwer, viel schwerer als leibliche Noth" (6 May 1895, p. 284).

What "das Neue" really means is never quite clear in these letters. Fontane calls himself totally "verdemokratisiert" (p. 302), he shows time and again sympathy with the working class, without being in particular sympathy with the Social Democrats, his enthusiastic acclamation of the early naturalist movement and of Hauptmann's social dramas in particular, caused a sensation at the time. Fontane is groping here too, towards something he seems unable to define, or to something which future inquiries may be able to elucidate.¹¹

These letters, excellently edited by Professor Schreinert, with a rich introduction that is particularly interesting about Fontane's style of letter writing, with copious notes clarifying even

Radbruch, *T. Fontane oder Skepsis und Glaube*, Leipzig 1945, 2nd ed. 1948, could not, of course, consider the new material provided by Schreinert.

¹¹ cf. p. 284 and note 7 on p. 384. The *Nachlass* contains an unpublished convolute of translations of an obscure English social poet, John Prince (1808-1866) with a preface of forty pages dealing with the conditions of the English working class (c. 1840). See auction catalogue, *op. cit.*, p. 76, no. 450. H. Fricke, *Fontanes letzter Romanentwurf. Die Likedeeler*, Rathenow, 1938, is also of interest.

remote events and personalities referred to, and with most valuable cross-references, should be a spur to provide the urgently needed critical edition and to literary research to re-evaluate the many problems posed by Fontane's works, which might result in an authoritative biography.¹² Almost simultaneously with Schreinert's edition there appeared a book on Fontane's political thought.¹³ The authoress provides a detailed account of Fontane's psychological development in this respect, she bears down heavily on his apparent shiftiness and lack of interest in politics and produces valuable material in an apparatus larger than the text, but her conclusions are to a considerable extent invalidated by the new material Professor Schreinert has brought to light. Fontane can no longer be summed up as a "conservative" whose main conviction was: "Die Ordnung bleibt gültig—und zwar die bestehende" (p. 72). Fontane's artistic work was of a revolutionary character, artistically. As a personality he was certainly not a revolutionary but he was a rebel who kicked against the pricks of the age of transition in which he lived. Art to him was closely bound up with society, he suffered from its artificiality (he identifies the poetic with the natural, Schreinert, p. 295) and his artistic credo was: "Eh wir nicht volle Freiheit haben, haben wir nicht volle Kunst" (p. 284).

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¹² The only biographies of considerable value though outdated are by Conrad Wandrey, a member of the George-Kreis (*Theodor Fontane*, München 1919) and, much shorter, Mario Krammer (*Theodor Fontane*, Berlin 1922). Wandrey's book was reviewed by Thomas Mann in 1920 (cf. "Anzeige eines Fontane-Buches" in *Rede und Antwort*, Berlin 1922, pp. 99-112).

¹³ Helga Ritscher, "Fontane. Seine politische Gedankenwelt". In: *Bausteine zur Geschichtswissenschaft*, Heft 8, Göttingen 1953, 159 pp.

THE JOB DRAMA IN MODERN GERMANY

"Unsere Zeit ist Hiob-reif geworden," says a modern writer. Over the centuries the Book of Job has been neglected as a source of creative literature, although the scholars have dealt with it fully and faithfully. The Mediaeval Mysteries abound in such themes as the life of Christ, the Last Judgment, Adam and Eve, and Noah—themes which are readily understandable within the framework of Christian teaching. Job does not seem to have attracted the writers of Mysteries, possibly because the treatment is too subtle and complex, and above all, too unorthodox. In a later age Goethe merely uses the dramatic technique of the Prologue in Heaven of *Faust*; he does not touch on the central problem. In the twentieth century there has been a revival of interest—not great, it is true, but sufficient to indicate that the Book of Job may hold a certain significance for modern Germany.

First and foremost it is a dramatic document. Its literary appeal is to the playwright, although it contains fine lyrical passages. To illustrate this I have taken a modern translation, contained in a collection under the title of *The Wisdom Books* by J. E. McFadyen. McFadyen divides the whole into a prologue, four acts, and an epilogue.¹ The prologue and the epilogue, as in the Hebrew original, are written in prose, whilst the intervening action of the drama is in verse.

The prologue is in itself a small drama; there is for example the dramatic presentation of the two councils of God and Satan. The situation is summed up with great economy of detail. Job is a man of considerable wealth, living in a secure bourgeois environment, a pious man who observes faithfully the code of his religion. Yet, as Satan suggests insinuatingly, it is a limited and sheltered existence in which there are few temptations. Jehovah himself tacitly admits the justice of the charge by allowing Satan to work his will on Job. It must be emphasized that Satan is not the adversary either of God or of Job. He is quite subservient to the will of the Almighty, and is simply an instrument for His designs. At this stage of biblical history Satan is not yet the Prince of Darkness; there is no dualism between Good and Evil.

¹ The division is as follows: Prologue, 1—3. ii; Act I, 3. iii—14; Act II, 15—21; Act III, 22—32; Act IV, 38—41; Epilogue, 42.

As a result of Satan's activities Job's material world collapses: in ruins, his riches are scattered to the winds, his sons and daughters killed, and finally he himself is smitten with "grievous boils". There ensues the long period of silence, seven days and nights, in which Job is joined by his friends. With the breaking of the silence the action proper begins.

It is a torrent of words which Job lets loose after his silence: he sends up a sustained cry of frustration in which he curses the day on which he was born, and longs for death as a cessation of misery. There is irony in this, for God has expressly ordered Satan to spare Job's life. Job's words are immediately taken up by the three friends in turn. They are the representatives of the smug, orthodox outlook, they still exist within the groove from which Job himself has been so rudely jerked. For them Job's revolt is an offence. He should accept his punishment gratefully and silently, as a corrective. "Happy then the mortal whom God correcteth. So spurn not the Almighty's chastening."

The climax comes at the end of the third act (ch. 31), in which Job throws out his tremendous challenge to the Almighty. It is a finely arrogant, and yet almost pathetic justification of his past life and the virtues which he has practised. "Every step of my life I would tell Him, Like a prince I would enter His presence." He calls upon the Almighty to answer and reveal the charge against him. And with terrifying suddenness Jehovah answers out of the whirlwind.²

To understand fully the impact of Jehovah's reply one must consider again the nature of Job's reaction to his trials. It is a constant cause for amazement that, in the orthodox view, his conduct reveals a "Christian stoicism". Anything less like stoicism than Job's various utterances would be hard to imagine. Indeed it is this quality which the Comforters find lacking in him and they rebuke him for it. The Almighty in His answer does not counsel meek submission; it is not the revolt of Job which He rebukes but his intense self-centredness, his tendency to find fault with the universe simply because he, Job, has suffered unjustly. Therefore He sets to work to lift Job out of himself, to show him how small, how ineffably puny he is in relation to the vast universe created by God. At last Job is silenced —

² It is the consensus of opinion that Elihu's discourse was inserted at a later stage. McFadyen adds it as a supplement in order not to interrupt the development of the drama.

"How small am I! What can I answer?" So ends the drama. In the epilogue the friends are rebuked and Job's fortunes and happiness are restored.

Quite recently a commentary by Hans Ehrenberg appeared under the title of *Hiob – Der Existentialist* (1952). It is couched in the form of dialogues which are not merely a re-examination of the Book of Job as it stands in the Old Testament, but an attempt to adapt its meaning to the needs of our time. It is in the introduction that the words, "Unsere Zeit ist Hiob-reif geworden", appear. For Ehrenberg, the downfall of the rich and pious man, Job, symbolizes the collapse of the rich, pious and "bürgerliche" world of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The Old Testament Job therefore represents the proletariat – Ehrenberg actually tries to force a socialistic message from one passage³ – and in his struggle with Man and God are mirrored the problems of the present day. The only solution is Job's solution, a "naked" belief in God, a God who is "real".

Ehrenberg divides the five dialogues into two parts. The first two dialogues he describes as literary, the other three, which do not concern us so much here, as theological. The literary exposition, for it is an exposition and not in itself a creative work, analyses Job's development as a dramatic character: the fate which sets him apart from his fellows, the conflict with the Comforters on the one hand and with God on the other.

According to Ehrenberg a man may live in a kind of pre-existence (Vorexistenz), in which he is not yet awake and not yet fully alive. This state corresponds to Job's life before the catastrophe. Then suddenly a metamorphosis takes place, a "dramatic explosion":—"die Puppe platzt, das fertige Tier tritt aus der Larve heraus und hockt in Staub und Asche, und die drei Freunde sitzen herum, und das Buch Hiob kann starten". Job is born again, he can begin to *exist*. And the process of rebirth, the experience of being catapulted from a stagnant pre-existence into a state of terrifying awareness makes of Job a dramatic figure. "Schauplatz bin ich geworden – und Theater, Schlachtfeld! Eine dramatische Person! Schicksalsträger! Theater! Das ist eben die Existenz!"

In this dramatic metamorphosis Job has left behind the friends who are still chained to a world of dulled perceptions

³ *Hiob – Existentialist* (Heidelberg, 1952), p. 19.

and comfortable half-truths. No basis of understanding, no bond of sympathy can survive such a complete separation of interests and experience. For the Comforters are, as Ehrenberg's Job says, "die 'anderen', die 'Freunde', die 'klugen Leute', die 'nicht Ausgebombten', die Menschen, die nicht gelitten hatten". They desire a world without suffering, without death, without war, without cruelty, without evil. Under these conditions they are prepared to believe in God. Such people therefore cannot know God as he is, they know only a "Gottesbegriff", and seek to prove it by philosophical and theological arguments. The real God is not the God of the official churches or of the pious. He is known only to those who have struggled with Him, who have stood face to face with him – Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, Luther and Pascal. For such as these God will not remain silent.

Ehrenberg's interpretation offers a spiritual solution to a European-wide sociological problem. There is however the possibility of a more national approach which is limited to Germany. During this century Germany has twice suffered eclipse. Two world wars have passed over her. Each time a few years have sufficed to change her from a proud, indeed an over-proud nation, into a shattered wreck. Each time she has become an outcast among the nations, but she has contrived to remain in existence, in fact has shown remarkable recuperative powers. However in 1945 especially the will to live had almost disappeared.

In the light of the above discussion three modern dramas must be considered important:⁴ *Das Spiel vom deutschen Bettelmann* (1932), by Ernst Wiechert, *Die Hochzeit von Dobesti* (1936), by Theodor Haerten, and *Draussen vor der Tür* (1946), by Wolfgang Borchert. Each is characteristic of its period. Wiechert's play expresses a vague national-conservative optimism, Haerten is obviously a National Socialist, whilst Borchert is typical of the despairing post-war generation.

Das Spiel vom deutschen Bettelmann is frankly allegorical. At the beginning the narrator refers to the play as "das Gleichnis vom deutschen Hiobssohn", and asks God to receive Germany to His throne again as the "prodigal son" of His nations. The prologue tells of the sheltered youth of the German Job, of his arrogant and selfish attitude towards others less fortunate than he. His life is undisturbed until his marriage-day, when the wed-

⁴ c.f. also K. Eggers: *Job der Deutsche* (1933); H. J. Haekker, *Hiob* (1937); F. J. Weinrich, *Das Gastmahl des Job* (1948).

ding bells are drowned by the tocsin of war. Job goes to war, meets the figure of death, and in the encounter loses a leg. He returns home to wife and child, a beggar and a cripple, and his property is put up to auction. During this scene the fortunes of the "individual" Job are completely identified with those of the nation:

DER AUKTIONATOR:

Des Hiob Hof, des Hiob Land,
wir bieten aus es auf der Gant.

Drei Groschen zum ersten, drei Groschen zum zwoten . . .
Drei Groschen zum . . . wer hat mehr geboten?

STIMME:

Vier Groschen!

DER AUKTIONATOR:

Vier Groschen für Kronen, Städte und Land!

Vier Groschen für Luther, Goethe und Kant!

In the main part of the play Job, his wife and son appear as a beggar trio, but there is none in the new Germany able to provide bread save "der Herr der Welt" called Pilatus. Pilatus receives them mockingly, but he and his gay company are made uneasy by the piteous pleas of the three apparitions. Job is thrust into a dungeon, out of sight and mind of Pilatus. Here Job acknowledges his past sins, for in Pilatus he recognises a likeness to his own former arrogant self. A heavenly figure declares that the time of suffering is over and that a new spirit is abroad in the land. The walls of the prison fall back and the dead appear. A dazzling light falls from heaven and Job joins the marching host.

The symbolism, although obvious, is rather mixed. The early part of the play adheres fairly closely to the original legend, but then Wiechert grafts on to the Old Testament story various aspects of the life of Christ, ending with the parallel to the Ascension which symbolises the revival of Germany. However it is not the deviations from the ancient legend which concern us, but rather the interpretation in the modern setting. In the Old Testament Job appears essentially as an individualist concerned with his personal relationship to God. He is moreover an outcast, cut off by his suffering from normal orthodox society. Wiechert's Job, it is true, suffers much the same fate but cannot in any way be described as an individualist. He is a colourless allegorical figure, and as such is quite incapable of uttering a

personal dramatic challenge. No conflict, no "Hubris" is possible when the central figure, as here, is only a *symbol of the community*. The whole play is unconvincing and rather facile. The undefined utopianism of its conclusions was not the weapon needed to combat the forces at work in Germany at that time.

The doctrine of National Socialism is clearly apparent in *Die Hochzeit von Dobesti*. Whereas Wiechert admitted that Germany had been guilty and Job was made to do penance for the whole nation, in Haerten's play the community can do no wrong. Haerten dispenses almost entirely with the original form of the Job story although the action takes place in an agricultural community. Job is a farmer whose property is heavily mortgaged. Crazed by misfortune and diseased in body, he sets fire to his farm and destroys his whole family. The leader of the community withholds judgment, and even defends Job until the case is proved against him. Then he turns upon him and casts him forth:

... Solche Untat ward dem Mensch allein,
Und unter diesen—schweigt mir!—einem Bauer,
Und einem unsres Stammes aufgespart.
Das reisst jed Band entzwei. Das tötet alles.

Thus the symbolism is given an entirely new twist. In the Book of Job Jehovah rebukes the Comforters who are the advocates of the orthodox outlook, because they had not spoken the truth about Him (ch. 42). In Haerten's version orthodoxy wins the day. The community alone knows the truth, rather it *is* the truth. Job is the living lie, the centre of decay within the community which must be eradicated. In more specifically Nazi terms Job is not of pure Aryan stock. He was the unfortunate son of a peasant father and a gypsy mother. The nomadic blood inherited from his mother is in continual revolt against the settled environment of the farm and is the direct cause of his madness.

One of the most notable features of these two plays is the way in which God is kept in the background. In both cases it is the nation or community which provides the ethical or spiritual basis. In Wiechert's case God is a mere concept, an image whom Job mechanically addresses when confessing his guilt. Haerten makes the situation even more clear. Discussing Job's guilt and punishment the pastor, under the pretext of making God the higher authority, actually deprives Him of any function or any influence in the world of men:

Gott steht's Erbarmen zu. Dem Menschen nicht.
Uns ziemt's, den Mensch zu seinem Heil zu zwingen.

The vital law-giving force is the community and there is an utter lack of interest in the Christian God. In the post-war play, *Draussen vor der Tür*, there is no trace of this bland self-sufficiency; Man is not indifferent to God, the tragedy is that God is indifferent to him.

Borchert's play most deserves to be called the twentieth century Job drama, and this despite the fact that it has no definite connection with the Book of Job at all. At least there is no evidence for it. Moreover Ehrenberg who must have been acquainted with *Draussen vor der Tür*, and whose style and ideas are occasionally reminiscent of Borchert, does not openly refer to it. On the other hand the very absence of a direct link merely supports the contention that the period after 1945 was particularly suited to the reappearance of the Job theme.

In both arrangement and outline *Draussen vor der Tür* bears a strong resemblance to the Book of Job. A narrative, and a prologue in which God and Death appear, provide us with the background to the situation. The hero, Beckmann, has previously enjoyed a comfortable existence, as witness his nostalgic monologue at the beginning of the fifth scene; after being plunged into the horrors of war and imprisonment he returns home to find the old world in ruins and himself an outcast. He is entirely dispossessed, his wife has left him, his child has been killed in the bombing, and he himself is partially a cripple.

Beckmann too yearns for death and tries to commit suicide in the Elbe, but she, a fearsome old harridan, rejects him. He sets out on a pilgrimage through society, trying everywhere to re-establish himself. What he seeks is a place in the world, a home to belong to as before, a girl to love him as his wife loved him; so too does Job think wistfully of earlier days—"O to be as in months long gone, as in days when God used to keep me".

The lament is actually an essential ingredient of both the Job and Beckmann dramas. H. E. Holthausen has referred slightly to *Draussen vor der Tür* as 'ein theatralisches Geschrei'. Yet this sustained lyrical outburst is the chief strength of the play. By comparison Wiechert's Job is inarticulate and the play suffers in consequence.

Beckmann finds, like Job, that there is no return. Between him and society lies a gulf which cannot be bridged. In his quest he visits three people, Oberst, Theaterdirektor, and Frau Kramer,

who differ from the Comforters in that they are frankly indifferent to Beckmann's fate and are violently caricatured, but who exhibit the same pious horror towards one whose suffering has transported him beyond the limits of their experience. They are the "others", the "wise ones", the "nicht Ausgebombten" of whom Ehrenberg speaks. Actually in one sense they are not indifferent to Beckmann. They feel, like the Comforters, that the secure ordered structure of their existence is somehow imperilled by the presence of so much misery.

With every door closed against him Beckmann sinks down in the street, and from the very depths of his despair he demands an answer from God. But there is no answer—God and Man remain silent and no epilogue is provided for Beckmann.

This ending is presaged already in the prologue in which God and Death meet. As a dramatic device the resemblance between the two prologues is striking, but the meaning is actually reversed. In Job Satan is the inferior being, in Borchert's play it is God who is ineffectual and subservient, for Borchert makes Death triumphant over God. During and after the war Death has been in the ascendant, he is the new God who is "believed, loved and feared". No one believes any more in the old man who "calls himself God".

Borchert's God is the deity that Ehrenberg rejects. In *Draussen vor der Tür* He is the direct opposite of the Old Testament Jehovah, He is the God of the theologians and the official church. Beckmann scorns a God who has been "immured in the churches", and who has become a "tintenblütiger Theologe". But he does not find the God of whom Ehrenberg's Job says: "Wenn jede Hoffnung genommen ist, dann kommt Gott wirklich. Immer, nicht nur bei mir."

There can be no doubt that Borchert saw no possibility of an answer to Beckmann's last despairing utterance. Throughout his work he is obsessed by the absence of God. Is this proof then that he had no feeling for religion? The very vehemence of Beckmann's appeal suggests the opposite. No man who denies the need for religion can seek God so despairingly. The whole paradox of the play, which is to some extent the paradox of our time, is summed up in a sentence from a recent discussion of modern literature: "Die Gefangenen sind der Freiheit am nächsten, so wie die Einsamen der Gemeinschaft, und die Nihilisten Gott am nächsten sind."

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FRENCH MANNERS UNDER THE JULY MONARCHY:

Louis Reybaud's Humorous Novel,

Jérôme Paturot à la recherche d'une position sociale

In the year 1842 there appeared in Paris a short novel entitled *Jérôme Paturot à la recherche d'une position sociale*. The publisher was Paulin; the name of the author was not disclosed. A sequel was issued by Paulin in 1843, under the expanded general title of *Jérôme Paturot à la recherche d'une position sociale et politique*, and in the following year he republished the two parts, now combined in a single volume. The original title was restored, and the author acknowledged paternity. He was Louis Reybaud, already known to the reading public through a series of *Etudes sur les réformateurs ou socialistes modernes*, first printed in the *Revue des Deux Mondes* and subsequently published in book form. In the same year (1844), Paulin brought out another edition of *Jérôme Paturot*, embodying the first corrections to the original text; a new edition, containing further, and fairly numerous, textual modifications, appeared two years later. It is for the most part the 1846 edition that Gabriel Brunet has followed in his, the latest, edition of Reybaud's novel.¹

Nowadays the name Jérôme Paturot is perhaps known only in academic circles, even in France. There was a time, however, in the 1840's, when this name was in current use among the French to denote a certain type of individual: the man who imagines himself fitted for everything and cannot make a lasting success of anything. With the collapse of the society satirized by Reybaud, the vogue of his novel declined. Now admittedly many of the experiences his hero passes through are characteristic only of a particular period of French history, namely, the years 1830-1848; however in some respects the satire has not altogether lost its point even today, and in any case *Jérôme Paturot* will always be of considerable interest to students of the reign of Louis-Philippe.

What sort of man was this Jérôme Paturot who has related the story of his life to the novelist? His was a "nature candide, accessible aux illusions et disposée aux expériences",² "une de ces natures qui ne savent pas se défendre contre la nouveauté, aiment

¹ In the collection "Cent romans français", Paris, Stock, 1949, in-16, xxii 480 p. All references in the present article will be to this edition, and for the title the abbreviation *J.P.* will be used.

² *J.P.*, p. 27.

le bruit par-dessus tout, et respirent l'enthousiasme".³ His besetting weaknesses, then, were a naïve indulgence in all manner of extravagant dreams and a blind passion for anything new. The author intends him to serve as a symbol, as an epitome of the excessive aspirations and pretensions of the youth of his day; he says so in as many words: "Cette nature candide . . . résumait par plus d'un point l'histoire et la situation d'esprit de la jeunesse actuelle."⁴

The novelist's satirical purpose is twofold: on the one hand, he holds up to ridicule the semi-educated young man who, taking his easily aroused enthusiasm for a sign of genius, is consumed by ambitions quite preposterous in one of his essential mediocrity; on the other hand, he denounces the spirit of the age in general, the corruption in officialdom, the lack of principle of the bourgeoisie, the latter's total absorption in the business of money-making. He scoffs at the excesses of the Romantics, but at the same time condemns the middle-class public's unresponsiveness to beauty, its unenlightened attitude towards art, and its low standard of taste in literature.

Orphaned at an early age, Jérôme Paturot is brought up by his uncle, a Parisian hosier, who is anxious to make him first his assistant, then his partner, and eventually his successor, in the family business. However, as a result of the exclusively classical schooling he has received at the *collège*, Jérôme fancies that he is destined for greater things. In the world of letters the Romantic revolution is in full swing; athirst for excitement and glory, Jérôme deserts his uncle's shop, joins the Romantic army, plays a vociferous part in the *Hernani* action, and makes his literary début with a 150-line poem in monosyllabic verse, beginning as follows:

Quoi!
Toi,
Belle
Telle

Que
Je
Rêve
Eve . . .

He then tries his hand at the sonnet, *ballade*, *iambes*, "meditation" and prose poem, fanatically cultivating colour, antithesis and *enjambement*.⁵ He has three volumes of verse published at

³ J.P., p. 6.

⁴ J.P., p. 27.

⁵ In Henry Monnier's *Mémoires de M. Joseph Prudhomme* (1857), which has much in common with Reybaud's novel, the point of departure is the same: "La bonneterie m'ennuyait chaque jour davantage", declares Joseph Prud-

his own expense, *Fleurs du Sahara*, *La Cité de l'Apocalypse* and *La Tragédie sans fin*, a venture that swallows up nearly all that remains of his fast-dwindling patrimony. Only four copies are sold; the rest continue to clutter up the room Jérôme occupies with his mistress Malvina, a gay and resourceful *fille du peuple*. They are soon without a centime between themselves and starvation, whereupon Malvina suggests that Jérôme give up flirting with the ungrateful Muse, and that they join the Saint-Simonian movement. This they do, and their experiences as disciples of Enfantin constitute what Jérôme terms the second canto of his odyssey.

As one might expect, Reybaud uses the theme of the emancipation of woman for comic effect; but while he shows up the ridiculous and chimerical nature of much of the doctrine of Saint-Simon, he acknowledges that its exponents were for the most part animated by a real devotion to the welfare of humanity, and by a sincere faith in the remedies they advocated for the ills afflicting the working class. Reybaud's hero and heroine participate in the cult for some months; but when it ceases to fill the stomachs of its votaries, the realistic Malvina persuades Jérôme to renounce it. Ever in search of novelty, Jérôme passes from one to the other of the various neo-Christian sects springing up like mushrooms in the Paris of his day; but "Hélas!" he declares, "je ne trouvai que chaos et impuissance, jalousie entre les sectes naissantes, schismes dans le schisme, mots sonores sans signification, prétentions exagérées, orgueil immense . . ."⁶ None of these experiences, then, enables Jérôme to attain the place in society to which he aspires. None the less, he continues to withstand the appeals of his uncle, who has not given up the hope of drawing him into the hosiery business. Jérôme's pride again brings him to the verge of starvation, but Malvina proves equal to the situation once more, and starts him on the third stage of his journey through contemporary society.

In the 1830's and 1840's, as the nation's material wealth grew, the whole of France was in the grip of speculation fever, and

homme, "et ma maladresse à séduire le client faisait le désespoir de mon oncle. Une sorte de rage de littérature s'était emparée de moi, je ne songeais plus qu'à la poésie."

⁶ *J.P.*, p. 24. However, from this general condemnation he excepts the self-styled 'Mapa(h)' (one Ganneau, founder of the fantastic religion called *évadisme*), whose personality and eloquence, he says, had made a strong and lasting impression on him.

there was no lack of unscrupulous individuals who sought to take advantage of a gullible public. "C'était le moment . . . où ces industriels florissaient", Reybaud writes. "La France était leur proie: ils disposaient de la fortune publique. Une sorte de vertige semblait avoir gagné toutes les têtes: la commandite régnait et gouvernait."⁷ A swindler called Flouchippe, whose acquaintance Malvina has cultivated, puts Jérôme, under the name of Napoléon Paturot, at the head of a bogus company whose professed activity is the exploitation of bitumen deposits in Morocco. Indignant at the part he is being made to play in this fraud, Jérôme imparts his scruples to his patron, who brushes them aside, saying: "La conscience! connais pas."⁸ Thereupon Jérôme threatens to make public the truth about the criminal enterprise in which, willy-nilly, he has become involved, but after a long and acrimonious dispute with Malvina, he gives further proof of his want of moral fibre by consenting to defer action. He fondly imagines that since the funds are in his keeping, he will be able to make restitution to the shareholders at any time; but of course Flouchippe, unknown to Jérôme, has a duplicate key to the cash-box and makes off one day with all the money, leaving his cat's-paw to suffer the consequences. At the same time Jérôme discovers that Malvina has disappeared, and the double shock causes him to faint away. When, some hours later, he regains consciousness, he finds Malvina at his bedside. He subsequently learns from her that Flouchippe had tried to carry her off with the money; meanwhile he battles with a serious illness, his eventual recovery from which he owes partly to the treatment given him by a brand-new graduate in medicine, one Saint-Ernest, but above all to the devotion of his nurse Malvina. Restored to health, he none the less remains plunged in depression, since he is unable to secure any kind of employment. "Un frotteur, un garçon de caisse, auraient trouvé de l'emploi dans les vingt-quatre heures", he complains: "mais un jeune homme littéraire, un poète, un socialiste, ne pouvait parvenir à se rendre utile et à s'occuper."⁹ At this point the novelist inveighs against the prevailing tendency to look down on manual labour, and deplores the congestion brought about in the liberal professions by this unwarrantable attitude:

"On s'obstine à considérer de certaines professions comme dignes et honorables par-dessus les autres, et le plus grand nom-

⁷ *J.P.*, p. 33.

⁸ *J.P.*, p. 42

⁹ *J.P.*, p. 50.

bre s'y précipite. Qu'en résulte-t-il? qu'on s'y étouffe et que, pour se tirer d'affaire, on abaisse, on dégrade la profession . . . Le bel avantage, vraiment, que celui d'avoir une foule inquiète de postulants pour des places déjà prises: écrivains sans éditeurs, avocats sans clients, médecins sans malades, ingénieurs sans emploi, artistes sans commandes, population improductive, presque parasite, que les atteintes de la misère ne guérissent pas toujours des inspirations de l'orgueil!"¹⁰

Dunned by his shareholders and faced with the prospect of legal proceedings, Jérôme pockets his pride and has recourse to his uncle, who pays his debts and again beseeches him to settle down; but Jérôme asks for another six months' grace.

It is not sheer perversity, but the pursuit of another will-o'-the-wisp that has caused him to reject his uncle's renewed offer: Saint-Ernest has put him in the way of the editorship of a review. The capital will be supplied by a banker, whose sole idea in founding the publication is to ensure favourable publicity for his protégée, a dancer at the Opéra. (We are reminded here of Balzac's description, in his *Monographie de la presse parisienne* (1842), of the *Directeur-propriétaire-gérant* of a newspaper: "C'est ou un homme fort ou un homme habile qui se résume par une danseuse, par une actrice ou une cantatrice, quelquefois par sa femme légitime, la vraie puissance occulte du journal.") So *L'Aspic*, "journal littéraire, paraissant quelquefois", is created and leads a precarious existence for a few months. This descent into the arena of journalism enables Jérôme to get his hand in and gives him a taste for the calling; he observes: "J'avais compris l'espèce d'empire attaché à la profession, empire indélébile, car il s'appuie sur la vanité humaine."¹¹ *L'Aspic* having given up the ghost, Jérôme turns to another nineteenth-century innovation, already well established, the serial story. He naïvely vows to elevate the tone of the genre; but the newspaper editor to whom he shows his manuscript promptly disillusiones him: "Nous vivons dans un siècle bourgeois, M^{onsieur}, au milieu d'une nation qui s'éprend de plus en plus pour la camelote."¹² The public is not interested in ideas nor in art, it wants strong sensation and crude effect. Taking this advice to heart, Jérôme becomes an exponent of that "industrial literature" denounced by Sainte-Beuve:

"J'avais changé de muse: mon oreille était devenue plus sensible au son du métal qu'à l'harmonie du style. Je comptais

¹⁰ *J.P.*, p. 50.

¹¹ *J.P.*, p. 64.

¹² *J.P.*, p. 69.

en écrivant; mes idées, malgré moi, inclinaient vers l'addition, et la fable la plus attachante me semblait inséparable d'un chiffre rémunérateur.¹³

His success is immediate, and it seems as if he has at last won a place in society; but flagrant plagiarism soon leads to his downfall. For a time he earns a living as a dramatic and musical critic, though he knows little about the theatre and nothing at all about music. Then he jumps at an invitation to found and edit a daily newspaper to be financed by the Government. He discovers, however, that Saint-Ernest, despairing of making money as a medical practitioner, is doing brisk business as a quack; "Soyons riches", Saint-Ernest says, "et nous serons toujours assez considérés."¹⁴ Leaving him, Jérôme goes off in search of one Valmont, a budding barrister formerly attached to the editorial staff of the ephemeral *Aspic*. Appalled at the odds against his making a name for himself at the bar, Valmont has become a notary. He admits that there have been cases of malpractice even in this formerly unimpeachable profession, for

"Le notariat est devenu, comme toutes les professions de notre temps, la proie des hommes d'affaires . . . ¹⁵ Toutes les carrières n'en sont-elles pas là? En est-il qui soient pures aujourd'hui, depuis le petit commerce qui falsifie et mélange les denrées, jusqu'aux fonctions parlementaires érigées en véritables agences à l'usage des électeurs?"¹⁶

Max, the third friend whom Jérôme seeks out, has got himself a sinecure in the Ministry of Education. Through him, Jérôme makes contact with the bureaucracy. On every hand he finds favouritism and inefficiency: "La vie des employés peut se résumer par deux préoccupations: arriver le plus tard possible, partir le plus tôt possible; et si l'on y ajoute travailler le moins possible, on obtient les trois termes de l'existence administrative."¹⁷ The schools themselves have become commercialized, the success of their pupils at public examinations now being, to the exclusion of all else, the yardstick by which their quality is measured. Thus, wherever he goes, Jérôme finds evidence for the view that nineteenth-century bourgeois civilization is a civilization of the money-belt, based solely and shamelessly on

¹³ *J.P.*, p. 77.

¹⁴ *J.P.*, p. 106.

¹⁵ Cf. the words of Anatole Prudhomme: "Qu'est-ce-qu'un notaire aujourd'hui? un industriel semblable à tous les autres industriels": *Mémoires de M. Joseph Prudhomme* (Paris, Dentu, 1892), p. 258.

¹⁶ *J.P.*, pp. 120-121.

¹⁷ *J.P.*, p. 130.

self-interest; and civilization of the money-belt means the tyrannical rule of the most unscrupulous business men and general acceptance of their scale of values. As a civil servant, Max has unlimited spare time, and he agrees to contribute to *Le Flambeau*. With him as his lieutenant, Jérôme successfully edits for several months a newspaper inspired and sponsored by the Government; but the subsidy having suddenly been withdrawn, he once again finds himself out of a job. He contemplates suicide; it is mainly vanity that suggests this course to him:

"Un suicide pose un homme . . . De mon vivant, qui est-ce qui a parlé de mes *Fleurs du Sahara*, de ma *Cité de l'Apocalypse*? A peine serai-je parti, que chacun de ces volumes deviendra un monument, une œuvre de génie. J'aurai des prôneurs; je ferai école; c'est infaillible. Tous les suicides ont du succès; les journaux s'en emparent; l'émotion s'y attache."¹⁸

Here we are reminded of the case of the poetess Eliza Mercœur, who, according to Louis Maigron,¹⁹ attempted suicide in the hope of immortalizing her name. This caricatural representation of the Romantic felo-de-se was suggested to Reybaud by the wave of suicides that swept over Paris in the 1830's. According to a contemporary English observer, Mrs Trollope,²⁰ many young Frenchmen and Frenchwomen took their lives without any other motive but the hope of getting themselves talked about after their death; and Auguste Barbier declared that suicide was tending to become

"Une affaire souvent de luxe et de théâtre,
Une froide parade."²¹

The faithful Malvina feigns to consent to share Jérôme's fate, and they prepare to asphyxiate themselves; but Jérôme's uncle, who was not to have been notified until the following day, arrives, thanks to Malvina, in time to avert the catastrophe.

This crisis has a salutary effect on Jérôme: his eyes at last opened, he decides to end where he ought to have begun, that is, to become a hosier, and from his experiences he draws this moral:

"Certainement . . . le régime . . . qui oblige le fils à suivre nécessairement la carrière du père est une loi sauvage, propre à étouffer le progrès et à faire dévier les aptitudes; mais il y a

¹⁸ *J.P.*, p. 147.

¹⁹ *Le Romantisme et les mœurs* (Paris, Champion, 1910), p. 328.

²⁰ *Paris and the Parisians in 1835* (Paris, Galignani, 1836), ii. 94.

²¹ *Iaribes, L'amour de la mort*.

aussi un grand péril dans cette mobilité inquiète qui jette les enfants hors des chemins où leurs aïeux ont passé, dans ces ardeurs mal réglées, dans ces besoins de gloire précoce qui tourmentent les générations actuelles. Comme un autre, j'ai cédé à l'entraînement général. Il y avait en moi l'étoffe d'un bonnetier, j'ai voulu être poète, saint-simonien, industriel, journaliste, écrivain politique, philosophe et que sais-je encore? Combien en est-il, dans ces professions diverses, qui ont méconnu, comme moi, leur véritable vocation, et privé le pays d'épiciers et de chaudronniers de premier ordre!"²²

At the beginning of the sequel Paturot is a prosperous merchant. Despite the chastening experiences of adolescence and early manhood, his self-conceit remains intact. Having become, in his own phrase, "un des hauts barons du commerce de détail et de demi-gros",²³ he is now avid for civic honours and aspires to public office. He remembers his late uncle's words:

"Tu as fait fi du commerce, sous prétexte qu'on y vend des bonnets de coton et des chaussettes. Eh! mon ami, c'est le chemin des honneurs aujourd'hui. Qu'est-ce que tu vois à la tête des affaires et au premier rang? Des marchands de drap et des marchands de chandelles. Prends tous les noms qui comptent dans le gouvernement, parmi les députés, parmi les pairs; tu y verras une foule d'hommes qui ont commencé par la jarre d'huile et le pain de sucre. Cherche bien, tu y trouveras des bonnetiers."²⁴

Thanks to the credit and power that wealth confers on its possessor, Jérôme becomes a major in the *garde nationale*, a *chevalier de la Légion d'honneur*, and finally a member of Parliament. Engrossed in extra-commercial concerns, he neglects his business, and when he at last becomes aware of its decline, it is already past salvation; after a strenuous but vain effort to restore his fortunes, Jérôme goes bankrupt.²⁵ Cured of his grandiose delusions, he thankfully accepts a low-grade civil-service post in a remote corner of the provinces, where he settles down contentedly with his wife (the same Malvina) and their children. As at the end of Part I of his confidences, he looks back over the past, again concluding that he had mistaken his way, and suggesting that many of his contemporaries have done likewise:

"Aujourd'hui, pour les politiques et les industriels, il n'y a

²² J.P., pp. 162-163.

²³ J.P., p. 170.

²⁴ J.P., p. 158.

²⁵ There is an obvious *air de famille* between Jérôme Paturot and César Birotteau; and the hosier's fortunes are reminiscent of the perfumer's rise and fall.

que deux chemins: l'un mène à la considération, l'autre à la fortune; le premier ne demande que la droiture, le second exige de l'habileté. Je n'avais pas assez de fermeté pour choisir le premier, pas assez de talent pour suivre le second. Avec plus d'imagination qu'il n'en faut à un homme d'affaires, avec plus de candeur qu'il n'en faut à un homme politique, j'étais une victime vouée d'avance à toutes les déceptions et à toutes les chutes. Suis-je le seul qui ait ainsi méconnu la portée de son esprit? et parmi les industriels n'existerait-il pas des prétentions pareilles à celles qui m'ont perdu?"²⁶

In the second part of his satire Reybaud inveighs against corruption in municipal and parliamentary affairs, the tyranny of majorities in the *Chambre des Députés*, the powerlessness of Cabinet Ministers, the ceaseless warfare between the various political parties, and the jealous rivalry between individual members. He also sharply criticizes the legal profession, notably the barristers, whose "*discours décousus . . . se composent d'interminables redites*", and who in their pleading indulge in a débordement d'injures indignes d'une époque civilisée".²⁷ He condemns the practice of imprisonment for debt and pokes fun at professional philanthropists; he scoffs at the lordly airs of those who would pass for literary geniuses, and makes sport of "rigged" stage successes, achieved by the exertions of hired clappers and the effusions of venal journalists. He gives an amusing description of a literary soirée, at which Mme de Girardin and George Sand—not mentioned by name, but easily identifiable—improvise before a wildly enthusiastic and thoroughly uncritical audience. He also makes game of the countless pseudo-learned societies of his day, looses a few shafts at such august establishments as the *Collège de France*, the *Sorbonne* and the *Institut*, attacks his contemporaries' exclusive fondness for Italian music, holds up to ridicule the current craze for neo-Gothic architecture, and denounces the excesses of the Romantic school of painting.

The above analysis of the contents gives more than a hint of the weaknesses of Reybaud's novel. His indictment of the age is too sweeping, his picture of the ills afflicting society too unrelieved. The form of the work, too, clearly leaves much to be desired, its construction being glaringly artificial. The author is bent on satirizing as many aspects of contemporary life as possible, so he steers his hero into a variety of situations

²⁶ *J.P.*, p. 471.

²⁷ *J.P.*, p. 229.

that will enable him to achieve that dominating purpose. He is interested, not in character, but in situation, and in the latter only in so far as it serves to illustrate a social tendency—and to amuse the reader. His central figure is composed according to a formula that he hardly attempts to disguise; Malvina is the conventional *grisette*; while each member of the procession of subsidiary characters does no more than exemplify this or that vice, foible or absurdity of the times. Without the saving grace of humour, such a sustained commentary on the seamy and ludicrous sides of an epoch could easily become tedious. It is the comic effect—proceeding mainly from the choice of language—that makes *Jérôme Paturot* such good entertainment. At the same time the work has considerable value as a *témoignage*, even if it is perhaps something of an exaggeration to describe it as “le bilan le plus complet et le plus juste des espoirs et des désillusions de 1848”.²⁸

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²⁸ ‘Fidus’, “Silhouettes contemporaines”, *Revue des Deux Mondes*, 15 June 1921.

HOMONYMICS: FRENCH WALLOON AND CHINESE*

The Duck and the Ass

Gilliéron's classical example of homonymic conflict was the clash between the cat and the cock in Gascony. But there was no need to go so far. Old French *ane* "duck" became homonymous with *asne* "ass" when *s* became silent in the twelfth century. The resulting confusion brought to the fore *canart* (later *canard*) "quacker", which until then had been purely jocular.

In Old French literature we generally find the *ane* "duck" in the company of other birds, or if alone, it is laying eggs—so the ass is kept away. However, confusion must have been frequent. Consider *Le Jeu de Robin et Marion*:

Li Chevaliers —

....

Mais veïs tu par ci devant,
Vers ceste riviere, nule ane?

Marions —

C'est une beste qui rechane?
J'en vi ier trois seur ce chemin,
Touz chargez aler au molin. (vv. 33-37)

Here the presence of *riviere*, which suggests the duck, is not sufficient to prevent misunderstanding. But we too are misled, in this case, by the appearance of words. We see "nule ane" and at once understand "duck" (*ane*, like its Latin ancestor *anas*, was feminine), whereas if we hear this, as was intended, *nule ane* and *nul asne* become practically identical. Failure to elide the final *e* of *nule* would make the line hypermetrical.

Let us now turn to the well-known Gargantua Prologue:

. . . Silenes estoient jadis petites boites, telles que voyons de present es boutiques des apothecaires, pintes au dessus de figures joyeuses et frivoles, comme de harpies, satyres, oysons bridez, lievres cornuz, canes bastées, boucs volans, cerfs limonniers et aultres telles peintures contrefaictes à plaisir pour exciter le monde à rire . . .

Canes bastées has not been explained. It suggests *asne basté*, especially with the neighbouring synonymous *oysons bridez*. But why *asne basté*? Let us shed light on this problem from that vast homonymy, Chinese, with its illuminating systems of indicators, visible and audible, of which more further on. Before *canard* finally supplanted *ane* there was a period of transition.

* Walloon is quoted according to the conventions of French spelling. For Chinese the traditional Wade system has been followed, but with omission of tone numbers, as these are apt to be misleading in compounds.

Ane and *asne* were visibly different, and to make that difference audible, an indicator was added when ambiguity might arise: thus was born *asne basté*. It belonged essentially to the spoken, not to the written language. It is significant that, while *une mule bastée* is a pack-saddled mule, *un asne basté* is a real ass, i.e. *un asne* with an s. Of course popular imagination punned on this and made the pun visible in those "figures joyeuses et frivoles . . . contrefaictes a plaisir . . ." by putting the saddle on the duck.

Asne basté had its counterpart, which collapsed with the triumph of *canard*. It has left a trace in the sign of a Nivelles (Belgium) inn of the sixteenth century; *L'ASNE BARREE*. There is little doubt that this *asne* was originally a duck (note the gender) *barrée* with a quill through its beak, like the *oysons bridez*.

It does not seem to have been noticed that the Renaissance *asne* was rather incongruous: he was saddled not only with a *bast*, but with a number of the duck's attributes as well, a worthy match for the *cane bastée*. Even the *bec* was powerless to prevent the *bec d'ane* from turning into a *bec d'asne*, now *bédane* or *bec-d'âne*. Thus too was incoherence thrust into the *coq à l'âsne* (hence perhaps our newspaper *canards*), and a current saw turned into a puzzle: *A laver la teste d'un asne on perd sa lessive*. No wonder this duck disguised as an ass soon became *un nègre*. It is significant too that the phrase *Il y aura ici de l'asne* (Rabelais IV, 36) had a variant with *oye*, probably the original sense (cf. the threat *Je luy ferai manger de l'oue*, in G. Cohen, *Recueil de farces françaises inédites du XVe siècle*, xxxiii. 467). The *pet* that we now find in the synonymous popular expression is, I think, substituted for this *asne*, through the well-known *pet de l'âne mort*, and the thistle *onoporde* or *pet d'âne*.

Luckily for the ass he was able to pass some of his poltroonery on to the *cane*. However, if my conjecture is correct, he was especially fortunate in his association, again through *ane*, with the goose, for in his company this venerable matron became a symbol of female stupidity, thus sharing his burden. People promptly discovered that the goose did look silly, and thus the bond was strengthened into an enduring union, soon recognized in Germany (significantly in *Parzifal*), and now taken for granted in the greater part of the world.

Now, could the duck and the ass have borne the same name? Even with an indicator it was unlikely in the case of creatures

of such immediate interest to man, and with no obvious point in common. However, popular imagination would soon have detected such a point and rationalized the situation, and since mammals are closer to us than birds, the duck would probably have appeared to be named after the ass, and not vice versa. Thus the duck would have joined company with a few mammal-named birds, as *chat-huant*, whose *chat* is due to popular etymology, and *chauve-souris*, commonly regarded as a bird.

There is also our own *jackass*. It should be noted however that this word is not current in Australia in the sense of "ass"—(*silly*) *jackass*, a euphemism for (*silly*) *ass*, applied to human beings, is of course quite different—but the relation between the two must have been clear to those who first named the bird, that is, if the jackass is in fact named after the ass. Whether it is so called because of its discordant cachinnations, or whether this is a popular interpretation of a totally different word, must be left for later research.

On the whole however birds and mammals are too close to us and too distinctive in our eyes to exchange names readily. But when we turn to humbler species, we meet little mammals and birds everywhere. We find for example that the woodlouse was called in Greek *oniskos* "little ass", and on this model, *asellus* in Latin, hence the German *Assel*. The well-known French *hanneton* is literally "a little cock" (cf. German *Hahn* and our *cockchafer*), but Albert Dauzat has shown that in Auvergne it was understood to be "un petit âne", and at once given the corresponding name in the local patois. Even more striking is W. von Wartburg's example (see *Problèmes et méthodes de la linguistique*, p. 111) from Southern France where, through clash of *acinus* and *asinus* into *aze*, the blackberry is not only thought to be named after the ass, but is also called *saumo*, another local name for the ass.

Now to come back to our duck. Ousted in France, it fared just as badly in England, when ME. *ende* (cognate with *anas*) came too close to *henne* and thus met its doom, because people would drop and add aitches indiscriminately, much as they did in Latin, and as they still do now. It is revealing that we find *hende* beside *ende*, and this must have been confusing. This gave *duck* "diver" its chance, which until then had lived in obscurity. Thus it was that in England the hen, in France the ass, killed the duck.

The German *Ente* was far less exposed. It long retained the

original vowel *a* (OHG. *anut*, MHG. *ant*), whereas *Henne* had *e* since earliest times, and more recently the vigorous aspirate helped to keep the two well apart, and thus saved the German duck. For if it had come to a show-down, *Henne*, backed by *Hahn* and *Hühner*, would have promptly annihilated the isolated *Ente*.

Further Examples of Homonymic Conflicts

Why did *bucca* "puffed-out cheek" supplant *os* "mouth"?

We find here again a striking case of homonymy. Just as *aurum*, *cauda*, etc. were frequently pronounced *orum*, *coda*, etc. in colloquial Latin, so *auris* became *oris* and thus clashed with *os*, *oris* "mouth". This was regarded as rural speech and avoided by careful speakers. Hence some ignorant "purists" would possibly say *auris* for "mouth", just as they said *plaudite*, which actually became the classical form.

As a result of this collision, *auris* gave way to the more distinctive *auricula* (previously "the external ear"), or rather *oricla*, and *oris* "mouth", weakened by this confusion, was ultimately supplanted by *bucca*, now a useful member of the language, instead of a luxury.

The form of *oculus* may have prompted the creation of *auricula*, but what is much more arresting is that the pattern for this development had been set already in prehistoric Latin by *oculus* itself. An examination of its Indo-European cognates leads us to expect **ocus* or **oquus*, and thus it appears that *oculus* developed from some stress similar to that which now produced *oricla*.

With *auris* absorbed by *oris*, it is likely that *oricla* came to be regarded as a neuter plural, meaning "little mouths", and this would easily become a feminine singular again, as *folia feuille* and many others. It would not sever its semantic relation to "mouth" until *bucca* had finally ousted *oris*. The same word will hardly do duty for "mouth" and "ear" in any language, unless some indicator is added to distinguish between them. Now, they are both essentially *holes*, and since the mouth as a hole is more obvious than the ears, these are far more likely to be looked upon as little mouths, than the mouth as a large ear. This is also to some extent why diminutives are more frequent than augmentatives.

A similar collision between two parts of the body was res-

possible for the disappearance of OFr. *vis* "face", when loss of final consonants in the sixteenth century made it embarrassingly identical with *vit*. "Régression", which a few desperate words resorted to as the only hope of survival, was useless here, as it would have made *vis* homonymous with *vice*, which was then losing its final vowel.

Latin *patella* became OFr. *paele*, which should have given *pelle* after reduction of the hiatus, thus clashing with *pelle* "shovel". That is why *pelle* "frying-pan" was replaced by *poêle*, at the time when there was hesitation between *è* and *wè* in many words. The situation was still awkward, as it then became identical with *poêle* "stove", but it was less critical since the genders were now different and the meanings further apart. So a compromise gave us *poêle à frire*, where *à frire* is actually an indicator. In Walloon, which normally resolves the hiatus by the introduction of a semivowel, *payèle* escaped both dangers and is admirably clear by itself.

A case of complete absorption by homonymy is that of *Folies-Bergère*, which preserves the old Picard *folie* (i.e. *feuillée*), reinterpreted to fit with the usual French *folie*. The celebrated *Jeu de la Feuillée*, by the Picard Adam le Bossu, was so called because it was performed in a *loge de feuillage*. Incidentally this expression is worthy of notice: the *loge* has so completely lost its original sense that we must add *feuillage* to put the leaves back into it. This would have been tautological in Old French.

Aller is still very mysterious, but we may perhaps get a glimpse of its birth in the language of venery, where the three Latin verbs *involare*, *anhelare*, and *ambulare* telescoped one another out of shape. So *anhelare* suffered metathesis, and *ambulare* may have been crushed into *aller*. If *involare*, itself badly crippled, evolved as a single verb, becoming *embler*, and not as a compound of *volare* (which would give **envouler*), this was because *volare* itself had been weakened by its encounter with *volere* (classical *velle*) "vouloir", and the expected **vouler* was thus supplanted by the learned *voler*.

Adjectives are very sensitive to collisions. Latin *planus* "level" and *plenus* "full" became phonetically identical in the twelfth century. Of the old *plain* only a few set phrases survive, and the former feminine *plaine*, which has long been an independent noun. But I think that it is also concealed in such phrases as *en pleine campagne*, *en pleine rue*, etc. On the other hand, when we refer to *une truie pleine*, this is the Old French *praigne* (Lat.

praegnans) transformed by "attraction paronymique". Thus the modern *plein* represents not only *plenus*, but to some extent *praegnans* and *planus* as well. Similarly, English *straight* has absorbed some of the old *strait*, itself ousted by this homonymy.

French *laid* and *lé* (from Lat. *latum* "wide") are another pair of irreconcilable adjectives. When *laid* lost its *d*, *lé* collapsed, thus creating a semantic vacuum, into which the neighbouring *large* "ample" was drawn. Hence the difference between French and English *large*. There is an interesting parallel in Spanish, where the usual word for "long" is *largo*, and for "wide" *ancho*, from Latin *amplum*.

It is obvious of course that many homonyms get on reasonably well together, especially if they refer to separate activities, or still more, if they belong to different parts of speech. In practice there is little confusion among the many French words pronounced like *sain*, *sans*, *seau*, *pois*, *ou*, *ver*, etc. But these are survivors. A glance at Old French will reveal how many words, which would have swelled these series, were discarded when ambiguity arose.

Thus, *oue* "goose" and *ours* "bear" became homonymous; hence the present pronunciation of *ours* and the disappearance of *oue*, replaced by the provincial *oie*. Remember also the confusion between *ou* and *au*, which led to the triumph of *dans* over *en*.

Ver "boar" was eliminated, partly because of *ver* "worm" (often with indicator *de terre*), but also owing to the need to distinguish between the domesticated *verrat* and the wild *sanglier* (*le ver solitaire* may well be the latest avatar of a boar turned tapeworm). And there is also that intriguing colour *vair*, which vanished when it became identical with *vert* in the sixteenth century.

People are apt to laugh at a lover's trials, but there is one, the French lover, who must arouse our sympathy. As *amatorum*, in the guise of *ameor*, he got on fairly well till an inexorable law turned him into *ameur*, where he met the descendant of *amorem*, then so indelicate that *amour* had been brought from "le midi courtois" to show that love was not just animal passion. However, in those days, human beings had two chances, and though most were satisfied with one, some took both, as *chancre chanteur*, *pâtre pasteur*. So our lover, undaunted, tried his second chance *amator*, and as *li ameres* he had many successes and grew bolder, but when another inexorable law turned him into *l'amere*,

fate dealt the worst blow: he ran into the mother! That finished him as a lover, and he became an *amateur*.

A few more condensed examples to conclude.

A clash between *montem* and *mundum* explains the decay of *mont*, replaced by *montagne*, the origin of quaint *monde*, and the arresting Rumanian *lume* "world".

The reason for the constant reconstructions of prepositions and adverbs is obvious, since for example *in*, *inde*, *intus*, and *ante* would all have become homonymous with *an*.

In Latin, Cicero's preference for passive *amaris* in present indicative, and *-re* in other tenses, is clearly to avoid homonymy with the other two *amare*. And *deabus*, *filiabus*, etc. are obviously remedies for a similar morphological ailment.

The early frogs *raines* hastened their doom when they kept asking for a king.

The French *dame* was left forlorn: all that now remains of her master is *dame*! So too the German Frau was bereft of her lord, now reduced to little more than *Frondienst*.

And it was a similar event that gave the German *Mücke* its chance to seize more "Lebensraum".

These are but a few examples of numerous homonymic conflicts, which the space available does not allow me to produce. Many will readily occur to the reader. My debt to Gilliéron is obvious, but I owe a great deal to Walloon, and still more to Chinese, of which I shall now proceed to say a few words. However I must first issue

A Warning to Homonymists

Behold the grim fate of *ovis*, nipped in the *ovum*, all but the barren, shrunken, barely discernible, ecclesiastical ewe of *ouaille*. But must the sheep be sacrificed to save the egg? They could well both be *oeufs*. Since a man may be an egg, provided he be good or bad, why not a sheep? For it is plain for all to see, that two kinds of eggs there be: the bald, that are laid by hens, and the others, the woolly ones. A shining symbol this, of the obvious fact that all true sheep are egg-shaped, and of the still more evident truth that all eggs are perfectly—shipshape.

WALLOON

It is well-known that languages in marginal areas such as Lithuanian, and especially those of the Celtic group, retain many archaic forms which throw much light on the develop-

ment of Indo-European languages. Now Walloon is in exactly the same position within the Gallo-Roman territory. It is moreover by far the best-preserved of all langue d'oïl dialects, is still widely spoken and possesses a rich literature.

I was born at Nivelles, ten miles south of the Germanic-Romance linguistic boundary (which cuts Belgium in two from East to West) and six miles east of the line which separates the Picard dialect from the Walloon. We all knew that people across the line said *ki* for "dog", whereas we said *tchi* (with nasalized *i*). It will be noticed that Walloon has kept the Old French *tch*, which became *ch* in Standard French in the thirteenth century. Similarly the Walloon corresponding to Fr. *gent* is still *djint*, showing a stage of nasalization even earlier than the Chanson de Roland.

In words like *pére*, *fleur*, etc. where French now uses the open vowel, Walloon still has the older close vowel; this is what the above spelling is intended to suggest. To *bête*, *tête*, etc. correspond *biesse*, *tiesse*, with characteristic diphthongization of the blocked vowel and survival of the *s* which in French became silent in the twelfth century.

Interesting too is the resolution of the hiatus with a semi-vowel,¹ as shown in *payèle* above, a process which has given remarkable longevity to words doomed early or struggling for survival in French. Contrast sturdy *awouss* (four sounds) with sickly *août*, now reduced to a single vowel, though a therapeutic *t* or *a* is sometimes pronounced in *en août*, but not in *mois d'août* where the indicator *mois* sufficiently individualises the word.²

¹ This is also characteristic of the regional French spoken in Belgium. At the Ecole des Hautes Etudes I was once asked by our "directeur d'études", who knew I was a Belgian, to pronounce *théâtre*, and I promptly volunteered the expected *téyate*. However most Belgians can and do avoid this semi-vowel when speaking French if they want to.

² This *awouss* is also of semantic interest. It denotes both "August" and "harvest". The latter sense is also usual in Old French and is found in La Fontaine and in regional French. *Fé l'awouss* is the normal Walloon term for "moissonner", whose cognate *mèchner* means "glean".

The change from "August" to "harvest" is frequent. From *Augustus* come the usual words for "harvest" in Breton (*eost*) and Dutch (*oogst*). The Germanic ancestor of *harvest* itself, which has kept its original sense in English (*carpere* is cognate), has become "autumn" in German (*Herbst*) and Dutch (*herfst*), while in Irish the reverse evolution has taken place. Similarly Greek *théros* "summer" developed the sense "harvest."

The Romans must have felt the substitution of *Augustus* for *Sextilis* to be specially apt in view of its relation to *augere*; the late spelling *auctumnus*, with *c* added, reflects a similar interpretation, though probably mistaken in this case.

Adjectives usually precede their nouns, as in *el cras via* "le veau gras" (note the original *c* of Latin *crassus*). This may be due to Germanic influence. Peculiarly Walloon however, is the ending *è* of adjectives in the feminine plural; compare *ène nwèrè gate* "une chèvre noire" with the plural *dès nwèrès gates*.

The usual negative is *ni* (with nasalized *i*), which corresponds to OFr. *nient*. Thus, *djè n'vwès ni* "je ne vois pas". *Pas* is unknown. *Mie* survives in the form *miyette*, but only in the positive sense: *wétiz ène miyette* "regardez un peu".

For "something", "somebody" Walloon uses *ène sakè*, *ène saki* (from *non sapio quid*, etc.), a formation parallel to *je ne sais quoi* which is current in many languages. But a remarkable shift has taken place here. The original negative having become homonymous with the indefinite article feminine *ène* is always interpreted as being this article, and the phrase is thus felt to be similar in form to *une chose*, *une personne*, the former negative sense being totally obliterated. In fact I had quite a shock when I realized that this article was actually the negative whose disappearance was so puzzling. Homonymy plays the strangest tricks.³

The vocabulary too is remarkable. Many local words defy translation into French; others require a whole sentence. *Tchômodu* for example is milk still warm (*tchô*) that has just been milked (*modu*).⁴ *Goria* is the yoke for carrying buckets. What is the French for this, *joug à porteur*? *porte-seaux*? *palanche* seems to be just a regional term. What is left of an apple after eating all around it we call *toucha*; in French there does not appear to be anything better than *trognon*.

Moreover besides such tasty "mots du terroir" there are many others which would make a strong appeal to English-speaking students of French, for instance those of Germanic origin which have come into Walloon from Flemish or the Rhenish dialects. Thus, among those quoted above, *gate* and *wéti*, which by the way is the ancestor of Engl. *wait* (Fr. cognate is *guetter*). In Eastern Walloon "look" is more usually expressed by *louki*

³ Shifts between parts of speech are common enough. Thus, *la Saint-Martin* (dem. pron. to article), *de par le roi* (noun to preposition), *durant la guerre* (verb to preposition), *All hail Macbeth!* (adjective to noun; hence later *hail to*), etc. But the Walloon type is most unusual.

⁴ From Lat. *mulgere*, whose extinction in Central French Gilliéron proved to be the result of collision with *molere*, just within the area where both would become *moudre*.

(cf. Fr. *reluquer*). Many boys are nicknamed *Crollé*, just as they are called *Curly* across the Channel.

But the greatest delight is to come across innumerable terms used just as they were in francien: thus our maids are still *mesquènes*, a wild boar is a *singlé* (which corresponds exactly to OFr. *sengler*, and not to *sanglier*), and meat is *tchar*, consistently with Lat. *carnem*, whereas the French word underwent "fausse régression" and semantic change. It is a wonderful experience to hear the people speak a language so closely akin to Old French.

This dialectical study is particularly fruitful for students of French philology now that the first volume of the *Atlas Linguistique de la Wallonie* by J. Haust and L. Rémacle is available. Actually it covers the whole of Romance Belgium, therefore all Walloon and Eastern Picard as well, so that we meet the modern descendants of the Picard forms so frequent in Old French literature. The maps of this atlas are so finely interpreted that they are immediately accessible even to beginners and linguistic geography becomes a sheer joy.

CHINESE

Just as numerous Latin words were ultimately reduced to monosyllables in French, creating many homonyms with frequent clashes, we find in Chinese a very similar situation.

Present-day Chinese monosyllabism is also the result of phonetic wear, but while in French you look for homonyms, in Chinese you can't escape from them. There can be no question here of solving the problem by elimination, as is so often done in the West, since the language itself would thus be eliminated.

This is due to the simple phonetic structure of the language. Only about 400 combinations are possible. Even with the four Mandarin tones which give a theoretical maximum of 1600, the situation remains desperate. The result is that while a classical text in its written form is perfectly clear, you cannot read it aloud and be understood. It must be transposed into the spoken language by adding suitable indicators.

To understand fully this delicate mechanism some direct knowledge of the ideographic script is essential. Unfortunately, limitations of printing make it difficult to explain properly the wonderful structure of these ideographs. I can only give a few hints here.

Apart from a number of conventionalized pictorial primitives and others formed by combining these, most ideographs are made up of two parts: the *radical* which suggests the meaning, and the *phonetic* which suggests the sound. Thus the radical is actually a *visible* indicator.

For example, *ma* may be "horse", "old woman", "jetty", "ant", "frog", "hemp", "blurred", etc., which is bewildering enough even if we add the tones, but the radicals, together with suitable phonetics, will at once distinguish between them. Thus, the ideograph for "ant" is made up of *insect* (radical) plus *horse* (phonetic), i.e. an insect whose name is *ma*. I am afraid this sounds rather a muddle. To appreciate these delightful ideographs you must see them.

Moreover Chinese transliterated into our alphabet not only looks painfully barbarous, it is also generally meaningless, since only a transcription of the phonetic is given and the radical is left out altogether, whereas a glance at the corresponding ideographs makes the sense at once perfectly clear. A transliterated text is exasperating to anyone who knows at all the Chinese script. Nevertheless I must attempt to give some illustrations of the way indicators are used in spoken Chinese.

To make "ant" intelligible to the ear, the *ma* mentioned above would obviously not be sufficient; there are too many homonyms. It must be accompanied by a word that shows which *ma* is meant. Now out of the numerous words pronounced *i* one means "ant". Put *ma i* together and the sense becomes audibly clear; when separate they must be *seen* to be understood. This is very much the same type as *strait and narrow*, or *kith and kin*; closer still in form are words like *butt-end* and *court-yard* where both synonyms are immediately side by side.

Another word pronounced *i* means "chair", and this is made distinctive by adding *tzu* "child": *i tzu* is at once understood. Though this *tzu* is still widely used in its original sense, it is here just an indicator. We may compare Fr. *oiseau*, *soleil*, *ouaille*, etc. but in Chinese you do not need philology to see what has taken place.

The famous classifiers which must accompany numerals are really indicators. For "three donkeys", you must say *san t'ou lü* (lit. three head donkeys). Our *head of cattle* is an obvious parallel, but while this is exceptional in English, Chinese has a most elaborate system of such classifiers, of which there are more than fifty.

You may object that by such a process Chinese ceases really to be a monosyllabic language. But it is not so, each part remains independent, and as soon as the context makes the sense clear, the indicator is dropped. Thus *fu* "father" usually takes the indicator *ch'in* "relation" in the spoken language: *fu ch'in*. Similarly *mu* "mother" becomes *mu ch'in*. But *fu mu* by itself means clearly "father and mother", each part throwing sufficient light on the other.

The history of English *island* is instructive. The ME. form was *iland*, which acquired an *s* through contact with *isle* (from Old French). This *iland* was originally *i* "island" plus *land*, an indicator added to give more body to a word whose small size exposed it to homonymy and extinction. This *i* in its unstressed form survives at the end of *Jersey*, *Orkneys*, *Ely*, *Swansea*,⁵ etc. Now the Chinese word for "island" is *tao*, and this is made audibly intelligible by adding the indicator *hai* "sea": *hai tao*. Structurally this resembles *island* very much. But the great difference is that *tao* retains its full independence whereas the original *i* of *island* could only emerge through philology. The indicator *hai* is cast off at the first opportunity; "peninsula" for example is expressed simply by *pan tao* (lit. half island, cf. German *Halbinsel*).

In China, as in several Western languages, a window *ch'uang* is looked upon as a variety of door *hu*. Hence the usual spoken word for "window" is *ch'uang hu*, with the main stress on *ch'uang* pronounced with its full first tone, while *hu*, being only an indicator, is unstressed and does not bear its usual fourth tone. *Hu* in this case merely points out which particular *ch'uang* is meant.

To render foreign proper names Chinese may use ideographs with their phonetic value, but generally prefers, especially if they are at all well known, to reduce them to monosyllabic form. Thus *France* becomes *fa* (first part of the word fitted into the Chinese phonetic structure) with indicator *kuo* "country". similarly *England* becomes *ying kuo*. But *ying fa* will often suffice for "England and France" or "British and French".

Africa and *America* would clash in the initials, so the second syllable is used: *fei chou* and *mei chou* respectively, with *chou* "continent" as indicator. Now *mei chou* means "America the

⁵ *Swansea*, i.e. "Swans' Island", interpreted here as Swan Sea, with consequent change of *z* to *s*. In China *Swansea* would never have lost its island, nor lodges their leaves.

continent", while *mei kuo* is "America the country", i.e. "the United States". And as these indicators may be dropped, Chinese possesses an interesting system *mei chou*, *mei kuo*, or simply *mei*, the latter being just as non-committal as *America* in English. Add *jen* "human being" to each one and you obtain the name of the people: *mei chou jen*, etc. This is the simple and elegant Chinese solution of a problem which has long baffled our languages: how to derive from *United States* or *Etats-Unis*, etc. a name for its inhabitants.

Chinese has hardly anything that corresponds to our genders, numbers, and cases; it takes little notice of tense; every unit is absolutely invariable. Function is almost wholly determined by word order. For example it is often impossible to tell whether a given word is a verb or a preposition—a severe, but fruitful, jog for our grammatical complacency.

Compared with our utilitarian and prosaic letters, the ideograph is a thing of beauty. Many works of art are made still more artistic by the addition of a few symbols which contain the concentrated wisdom of the ancient sages in a form that delights the eye.

Chinese is timeless. The literary treasures of more than twenty-five centuries are as accessible as if they had been written only a few years ago. While the various dialects went on with their respective evolutions, the written language remained almost unchanged. It has now practically become the international written language of the Far East. The spoken dialects are localized and much less important. Many people whose languages are quite unrelated to Chinese can read the ideographic script but they pronounce it with their own words. This is not translation, any more than the words *horse*, *cheval*, *Pferd*, *equus*, etc. when prompted by the picture of a horse.

This script is the only living system of writing which makes meaning visible. It is independent of, and yet at the same time related to, all spoken forms. Its unique position is not unlike that of Latin in mediaeval Europe, but with this vital difference, that Latin, owing to its alphabet, could not be anything but Latin.

Moreover it would be difficult to find a language more adaptable than Chinese for the expression of new ideas and recent inventions. While we ransack Latin and Greek, Chinese will immediately produce from its own stock any number of words admirably suitable for electricity, television, atomic power, etc.

Whereas alphabets represent more or less the pronunciation

of a particular time and place, ideographs are absolutely independent of such limitations. Our archaic and conventional spelling may appear to bridge partly the gap separating the two systems, but this is an illusion. Moreover the visible size of our words is directly related to their spoken volume. Hence the shortest run nearly the same risk of extinction in writing as in speaking, despite artificial remedies such as those which have left us that little monster *y*, for older *i* (Lat. *ibi*). On the other hand, no matter how phonetic attrition reduces it in speech, the Chinese word will always occupy the same space. In this magnificent integrity it is eternal.

To be really convincing this brief introduction to Chinese should be supported by the ideographs themselves. You could then see to what extent the radical reveals the semantic evolution of words since the earliest times—and what an insight we gain into the psychology of the people through the ages! More remarkable still is the light that is thrown thereby on many specific problems of Western philology. But this must be the subject of a later article as it would bring this paper far beyond its proper limits.

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QUOD VULGO DICITUR

It is now nearly fifty years since Ferdinand Brunot wrote in the first volume of his *Histoire de la langue française* (p. 287):

“Une étude sémantique du vieux français, malgré l’existence de recueils comme les dictionnaires de Du Cange et de Godefroy, ne sera possible que quand les dépouillements méthodiques et complets auront fait connaître les dates de l’apparition dans les textes de significations nouvelles, aussi bien dans les textes bas-latins que dans les textes romans; jusque-là les méprises les plus grossières resteront possibles.”

With the exception of a few isolated examples¹ this is still true today. The purpose of this article is to indicate the interest of such *dépouillements* through some examples which stem from a particular situation.

One of the most important linguistic effects of the Carolingian Renaissance was to widen the gap between written Latin and spoken Gallo-Romance, and this holds true for vocabulary. Writers of the eighth and ninth centuries were not unconscious of this gap, as Nithard’s recording of the Strasburg Oaths indicates strikingly. Nithard is one of the first to use the phrase which has been used as title to this article. Louis and Charles met, he says (III, 5):

“in civitate quae olim Argentaria² vocabatur, nunc autem Strazburg vulgo dicitur.”

Later, the *clerics* who drew up legal charts (deeds of transfer, etc.) in the abbeys, monasteries and churches, had the additional reason for inserting such an explanatory clause that they were thus increasing the mutual understanding by the contracting parties of the terms binding them. Many do not bother to use the explanatory formula at all, but bluntly write a latinised form of or even the actual word used in the spoken language, and this procedure of course becomes general.

The following are selected examples with the explanatory

¹ D. Zeglin, *Der homo ligius und die französische Ministerialität* (Leipzig, 1915); E. Lesne, “Les diverses acceptions du terme *beneficium* de 8e au 11e siècle”, in *Revue historique du droit français et étranger*, 4e. série, t. 3 (1924), pp. 5-56; J. Hollyman, “Le Développement du vocabulaire féodal en France pendant le haut moyen-âge” (Paris thesis, 1950); S. Scoones, “Les Noms de quelques officiers féodaux des origines jusqu’à la fin du 12e. siècle” (Paris thesis, 1951); the last two only in typescript.

² The full form of this name, as found in the inscription and in Ammianus Marcellinus, is *Argentoratus*.

formula: *Cherche*. The earliest attestation of this word, according to Dauzat, is a thirteenth-century example given by Godefroy from the Archives de la Meurthe:

"Li franc home doient les cierches si li ville ait guere" (1269).

The meaning here is "tournée, ronde, patrouille." Other early meanings given by Godefroy are "recherche, enquête" (whence English *search*), and "surveillance," "inspection."

An eleventh-century chart from the abbey of St. Florent-près-Saumur suggests that the word was applied to a tax levied by the church:

"De servitio predicti clerici sic erit ut si unus fuerit monachus litteratus, assiduus sit ille in servitio; si autem plures fuerint litterati, in iussu et monitione eorum erit, et de synodo et questu, quod vulgo dicitur *cerchia*, tertiam partem reddet" (24 May 1097). (*Chartes normandes de l'abbaye de Saint-Florent près Saumur* (710-1200), ed. P. Marchegay in *Mémoires de la société... des antiquaires de Normandie*, 3e. série, t. 10 (1880), p. 47.)

This raises the question of whether there is a continued use of the word in church circles, leading to the contemporary use for the "collection." At present, dictionaries appear to assume that this use is a specialising of the general sense.

Entonnoir: Dauzat and Bloch-Wartburg quote the thirteenth century as the earliest appearance, and both derive the word, through *entonner* (un liquide), from **tunna*, presumed to be Celtic.

The question seems to be re-opened by a chart of the very early eleventh century, from Chalon-sur-Saône, where the word is used as a place-name:

". . . diurnales duos de campo et pratum illi continuum, que sunt sita in prata Giraldi, iuxta fossam *intoshonorie* vulgo dictam . . ."

(*Cartulaire du prieuré de St.-Marcel-les-Chalon-sur-Saône* (ed. P. Canat de Chizy, Chalon-sur-Saône 1894; No. 49, pp. 53-54).

In a note the editor states:

"Ce mot singulier désigne la fosse désignée encore sous le nom de l'Entonnoir dans la commune d'Aluzc, où le ruisseau des Giroux s'engouffre près du moulin dit de l'Entonnoir, pour reparaître plus loin au lieu dit Pont-Latin."

The form of the word and its early use in what, on present conceptions, would be a figurative way, are curious.

The forms quoted by Godefroy are: 1302, antonoer (Brittany);

1366, entonnoirs; 1390, entonnouer; 1465, anthonnouers; 1507-1508, anthounouers (Nevers).

In four of these words, the treatment of what would be the tonic vowel if the word had a Gallo-Roman etymon tends to indicate that classification of *entonnoir* as a derivative of *entonner* may be incorrect, although clearly the word would be rapidly attached to *entonner*.

What adds to the interest is Meyer-Lübke's mention (REW 8986) of *toana* in the Siebenbürgen dialect of German, with the suggestion that it is a recent borrowing from Sienbenbürgen-Saxon. Here the tonic vowel of the simple word is replaced by a diphthong, as in *-tohon-*, the apparent root of *intoshonorie*. *Toana* is explicable as a normal southern dialect form of standard *tonne*, and it seems possible that some similar explanation might be found for *-tohon-*.

In any case, the points requiring explanation are the origin of *-tohon-* and of the *-o(u)er* suffix of the early French forms.

In more general terms, the problem is whether *intoshonorie* is related to the family of *tunna* or whether it is another word which has come from a different source and has merged with an *entonnoir* of the **tunna* family.

Garde (twelfth-century). Here the charts bring out clearly the feudal sense of the word:

"... accipiebant homines mei de vineis supradicti sancti, pro custodiis que vulgo *gardias* dicunt, contra morem, quantum illis videbatur" (1040-1080, Marseilles).

(*Cartulaire de l'abbaye de Saint-Victor de Marseille*, ed. B. Guérard, Paris 1857, Collection des documents inédits, t. 2 no. 665, p. 11).

"de custodia quam vulgo vocamus *guardam* quam ipsi habebat in villa sancti Flori, pro qua ipsa villa erat dessolata et ad nichilum pene redacta" (twelfth century, Chamalières).

(*Cartularium*, ed. l'abbé Fraysse in vol. II of *Tablettes historiques du Velay*, Le Puy 1871, no. 131.)

Two other quotations illustrating the meaning of *custodia*, which seems to have been fairly regular everywhere, will help make the sense clear:

"do sancto Petro Carnotensi domum meam . . . tali si quidem ratione ut, quandiu vixero, per voluntatem et jussionem monachum sancti Petri, eam custodiam ipsique, jure dominorum, in perpetuo possideant" (1030-1048, Chartres).

(*Cartulaire de l'abbaye de Saint-Père de Chartres*, ed. B. Guérard, Paris 1840, Collection des documents inédits, no. 190.)

"et si ipsi monachi servientem posuerint ad custodiam ipsius graneae, nobis fidelitatem faciet" (1111-1112, Orléans).

(*Cartulaire de l'église Sainte-Croix d'Orléans*, ed. J. Thillier and E. Jaury, Orléans 1906, p. 136.)

Haie (twelfth-century, *Aiol*).

"calumpniam siluarum et sepium quas vulgo dicunt *hayas*" (1053, Paris).

(*Recueil des chartes de l'abbaye de Saint-Germain-des-Prés*, ed. R. Poupardin, Paris 1909, t. 1, no. 59, p. 96.)

Pasnage (1196, Godefroy: *paasnaige*, from the *Cartulaire de Guise*), "droit de pâturage."

"et in bosco suo ipse Helinannus Sancto Vincentio *pasnagium* propriorum porcorum et *pasnagium* villanorum Sancti Vincentii . . . (donavit)" (1040-1065 Le Mans).

(*Cartulaire de Saint-Vincent du Mans, ordre de St. Benoît*, ed. R. Charles and S. Menjot d'Elbenne, Mamers 1886-1913, t. 1, col. 143.)

"Donamus etiam porcis monachorum de Asceio pastum quod vulgo dicitur *pasnagium* in omnibus siluis nostris, tam in feuo Asceii quam in feuo patris mei Ruberti" (c. 1125, Assé-le-Riboul).

(*Cartulaire d'Assé-le-Riboul, prieuré de l'abbaye de St. Nicolas d'Angers*, 1097-1506, ed. B. de Broussillon in *Archives hist. du Maine*, t. 3 (1903), no. 8, p. 11.)

Suffix—age: This suffix was particularly common in the formation of names for feudal taxes. Its popular character (in contrast no doubt to the character of the taxes) is suggested by the following:

"teloneum aut quod vulgari sermone ripaticum, aut portaticum, aut salutaticum, aut cespitaticum, aut cenaticum, aut pastionem, aut laudaticum, aut trabaticum, aut ullum occursum . . . (dicitur)" (884 Cormery).

(*Cartulaire de Cormery*, ed. J. Bourassé, Tours 1861, no. 16, anno 884.)

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HARTMANN'S *IWEIN* AND CHRETIEN'S *YVAIN*

AS SEEN BY THE CRITICS

Over the last eighty years the relationship between Hartmann's *Iwein* and the old French *Yvain* of Chrétien de Troyes has received the attention of many critics, most of whom conveniently fall into generations, or groups of critics employing the same methods of research and arriving at similar conclusions.

The first work of importance was Ludwig Blume's *Ueber den Iwein des Hartmann von Aue*,¹ a dated work following on three earlier pedestrian investigations.² Blume does not base his observations on an exhaustive comparison of the original texts; rather he views both works against the background of medieval French and German literature. The few references made to the texts are quite mechanical and are used to support Blume's thesis that from the point of view of content, ideas and the composition of *Iwein* Hartmann remained so true to his source that he cannot be said to have done more than simply translate the old French poem into German. He denies Hartmann any originality whatsoever and even goes as far as to say:

"... denn fast alles, was im Iwein durch Bildung, Geist, Menschenkenntnis oder irgend ein anderes Verdienst anzieht, gehört dem Franzosen. Alles was ich von Hartmann sage, gilt also eigentlich und zunächst von Crestien."³

Yet Blume is apparently aware of certain differences in character drawing and points out Hartmann's attempt to soften the severe harshness of the French Laudine. But instead of referring to the other actions of Laudine and trying to conceive her as a character with her own individuality, he explains away these differences as national characteristics and proceeds with a lengthy digression on the nature of love in man and woman⁴ — sweeping generalizations which, be they true or untrue, certainly cannot be applied to the characters of *Iwein* or *Yvain*; Blume does not even attempt to do so. However, in this respect, Blume is a product of his times and perhaps should not be blamed for

¹ Blume, L., *Ueber den Iwein des Hartmann von Aue* (Vienna, Alfred Hölder, 1879).

² Gärtner, *Der Iwein Hartmanns und der Chevalier au Lion* (Inaugural dissertation, Breslau, 1875); Rauch, *Die walisische, französische und deutsche Bearbeitung der Iweinsage* (Dissertation, Göttingen, 1869; Settegast, *Hartmanns Iwein verglichen mit seiner altfranzösischen Quelle* (Dissertation, Marburg, 1873).

³ Blume, *op. cit.*, p. 10.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 23.

not adopting the psychological method of literary criticism which appears in the twentieth century.

In 1894 Anton Schönbach published his *Ueber Hartmann von Aue*,⁵ which was followed two years later by Gaster's *Vergleich des Hartmannschen Iwein mit dem Löwenritter Kristians*.⁶ The latter is not favourably disposed to Hartmann and, like Blume, would have us think that Hartmann was a mere imitator. However, Gaster does adopt the new critical procedure which Schönbach had used in his book two years earlier. Both authors compare the two versions of the legend with the object of finding out something new about Hartmann the poet and moralist. Gaster seems to be unable to distinguish anything original in Hartmann, but Schönbach succeeds in establishing a more positive relationship, although this is at times questionable. For instance, under the heading "Religion und Sittlichkeit" Schönbach remarks on the large number of passages concerning divine intervention which Hartmann seems to have taken directly from Chrétien; then follows a list of the passages in which Iwein or some other character calls on God for help, for instance:

"die vrouwen bâten alle got,
daz sîn gnâde und sîn gebot
in ze helfe kêrte."⁷

Chrétien's versions of these passages are also given. Schönbach mentions that in both versions God is called upon to fulfil good and evil wishes; however, such expressions as "if it please God" are not translated by Hartmann; nor does he mention the Holy Spirit; but yet many invocations to God do not appear to have been inspired by Chrétien, for instance "eiâ herre got der guote", "nû herre got". But it is surely dangerous to use such observations as evidence of the depth and form of Hartmann's religious feeling; Schönbach does not ask himself whether Hartmann may have added words and phrases or left others out simply in order to complete lines or rhymes, the approach adopted by later critics. Yet Schönbach's approach seems to have appealed to his immediate followers and for the next twenty years comparative studies of the two epics continued to be based on imperfect and inaccurate knowledge of the texts.

⁵ Schönbach, A., *Ueber Hartmann von Aue* (Graz, 1894).

⁶ Gaster, B., *Vergleich des Hartmannschen Iwein mit dem Löwenritter Kristians* (Dissertation, Greifswald, 1896).

⁷ *Iwein*, lines 5351-53 (Lachmann's edition, Berlin, 1868).

The next major works on the subject are both by Frenchmen: Piquet's *Etude sur Hartmann d'Aue*⁸ and Firmery's *Notes critiques sur quelques traductions allemandes de poèmes français au moyen âge*.⁹ Although Piquet's study is primarily concerned with establishing the personality of Hartmann the poet and moralist, he makes many interesting references to Chrétien's work. Yvain, the Frenchman, has more natural vivacity, never fears defeat and there is a certain soldierly bluntness about his conversation, especially his questions. Iwein, the German, is sober, a model of social etiquette and restraint. Chrétien has more verve in his style and is possessed of "singular lucidity". Hartmann does not use many colours and sometimes lapses into dull description. He is motivated by the love of clarity, common sense and logic. He purposely omits the "Gallic" portions of Chrétien's account. Piquet has obviously realized that there are certain radical differences in the two versions of the story and has made an attempt to formulate these. He was probably the first critic to realize that the French Laudine and the German Laudine are quite different persons. He conceives the two as whole personalities and comes to the following conclusions:

"Chrétien's Laudine seemed to Hartmann to lack true feeling; so he set about making her more affectionate. He stressed her love for her husband . . . and had no regard for the original Laudine, whom he considered quicktempered, haughty and hard. That is why he made her appear more loveable, more modest and more tender and submissive in the final reconciliation scene".¹⁰

Piquet then points out that Hartmann's alterations are not justified by the rest of the story. The character Hartmann obtains is more beautiful from the moral view-point but suits the action in no way; it is absolutely illogical that Hartmann's heroine, with her exquisite qualities of the heart, should forget within a few hours the memory of her dearly-loved husband and throw herself in the arms of his murderer; that she should rebuff Yvain and lead him into distraction for something which after all is not important and, finally, that she should condemn to the stake the servant who had given her so many proofs of devotion. And

⁸ Piquet, F., *Etude sur Hartmann d'Aue* (Paris, E. Leroux, 1898).

⁹ Firmery, J., "Notes critiques sur quelques traductions allemandes de poèmes français au moyen âge", *Annales de l'Université de Lyon* (Paris/Lyon, 1901).

¹⁰ Piquet, F., *op. cit.*, p. 142.

this is Piquet's original contribution to Hartmann/Chrétien criticism; we shall see how later critics give a great deal of attention to this problem of motivation.

In the following year, 1927, appeared Firmery's *Notes critiques sur quelques traductions allemandes de poèmes français au moyen âge*.⁹ This man probably did more for this type of comparative criticism than any other critic. Firmery writes with a certain amount of exasperation in answer partly to Piquet's book and partly to the first large critical edition of *Iwein* by Henrici.¹¹ His starting point is not literary appreciation; he is trying to clear away the fog of vague generalizations which was descending upon Hartmann/Chrétien criticism. He begins by saying:

"Why incessantly ask this question of the superiority of the translator or the imitator on the original? The only really important question in comparisons of this sort is the following: To what degree is the German author dependent on the French author and how much of the original has he incorporated, either in the ideas or the form of his own work?"¹²

Firmery questions the examples which Piquet chose to support his view that Chrétien does not aim at precision, that indications of place are indifferent to him whereas for Hartmann they are the important thing. Firmery shows that Hartmann's additions are usually merely words inserted to complete the rhyme. He then turns to Henrici's edition of *Iwein* and proceeds to tear it to pieces. Henrici had signalled the lines which he claimed to be original Hartmann. In almost every case Firmery is able to show that these lines are not original at all, but rather translated and transposed lines from Chrétien. What Henrici points out as Hartmann's independence of Chrétien is really only Hartmann's free adaptation; he does not modify the story by large suppressions or additions; he is, towards the end of the story, simply less enslaved to the order of lines of the French original and arranges them more freely. Hartmann's individuality is to be found, according to Firmery, in his amplification, his handling of rhymes, his ability to vary his expression and his love of allegory and antithesis. Firmery believes that in order to discover Hartmann's moral purpose we must start with a close examination of both texts, taking into account not only

¹¹ *Hartmann von Aue. Iwein der Ritter mit dem Löwen*, edited by E. Henrici (Halle, 1891).

¹² Firmery, J., *op. cit.*, p. 10.

the small variations but also those passages of Chrétien which Hartmann has either completely transposed or broken up with theoretical digressions.

The same year saw the appearance of Putz's book *Chrestiens Yvain und Hartmanns Iwein nach ihrem Gedankengehalt verglichen*.¹³ Putz stresses Hartmann's efforts to make his characters ideal ones by removing any traces of discourteous or rough conduct likely to offend his readers; in doing so, however, Hartmann tends to make his characters mere mouthpieces for his own moralising. Putz's method is to sum up the characters and also to analyse the traditional elements inherited from the old heroic epics and the elements of the new courtly education. Chrétien's knight is a lover of battle and has great self-confidence; but he is not boastful, rather selfless, pious and noble; he is courteous to the simple folk and is always governed by his reason – until he sees Laudine, when he is deeply moved by her beauty. This sensuousness later turns to a deep true love, strong enough to unbalance him. The second half of the story, Putz claims, has as its purpose the depiction of Yvain's increasing ability as a knight and the reconciliation with Laudine because of his lasting love and faithfulness. Putz claims that Hartmann enhances these virtues, at the same time omitting Chrétien's references to actions which could be considered unmanly and weak. Hartmann adopts the same method with Laudine; he removes her "Masslosigkeit", her violent tears and her violent temper. This, of course, results in an unbalanced character. For how could such a noble lady possibly marry her husband's murderer or condemn her maid to the stake? Chrétien mentions Laudine's fickleness but Hartmann speaks only of her "natural womanliness".

Putz sums up in three points: firstly, Chrétien's *Yvain* is not merely a story of adventure. It is the depiction of the spiritual development of the hero. Secondly, *Yvain* is a "Problemdichtung"; Chrétien takes up attitudes to the old German heroic ideal, to the new courtly education, to love aimed at marriage and to the Provençal "Minnedienst". And thirdly, Hartmann refines the characters, deepens the psychological motivations but, in his efforts, experiences difficulties in making the characters believable.

¹³ Putz, R., *Chrestiens Yvain und Hartmanns Iwein nach ihrem Gedankengehalt verglichen* (Inaugural dissertation, Erlangen, 1927).

Putz's work seems to have given added impetus to comparative studies for two years later, in 1920, came Witte's *Hartmann von Aue und Kristian von Troyes*.¹⁴ This is a very detailed work, in fact, too detailed for treatment here. However, Witte's new method is worthy of mention. He first analyses *Yvain* and finds the whole story to be divided into two books, the second of which is a stylistic repetition of the first. Each book has an Introduction, a Main Body, divided into two sections A and B, divided into three sub-sections (i), (ii) and (iii), which are in turn divided into smaller episodes. Each episode is joined to the others either by contrast or by the repetition of motifs, by tensions or by helping to build up to the final climax of the section. On the face of it, this analysis seems rather forced, but the exposition is so logical and so well documented that it is worthy of close examination. Witte finds Chrétien's structure missing in the work of Hartmann, who has simply translated slab by slab without realizing the graded nature of style and subject-matter. Witte applies his method to the investigation of the characters and finds the same evidence of contrasts and climax (*Steigerung*). But not in Hartmann's characters; Hartmann, says Witte, was so engrossed in writing for a polite society that he did not attempt to experience his characters as real people and, in turning Iwein into an ideal knight right from the beginning, excluded all possibility of our considering his work as an "Entwicklungsroman", which Witte definitely believes Chrétien's work to be. Witte's main contribution to Hartmann/Chrétien criticism is his research into the structure of the poems and the effect which the authors' moral purposes have upon the characters, although in this last point he owes much of his inspiration to Putz.

In 1939 appeared a lengthy article by Herbert Drube called simply *Hartmann und Chrétien*;¹⁵ he explains his reasons for writing it in the first pages of the book:

"Witte's investigation demonstrates convincingly Chrétien's superior ability and the fineness of his fashioning. However, his valuation of Hartmann's art cannot go uncontradicted for it becomes too negative and so falls into the old false conception of our poet as a more or less free translator."¹⁶

¹⁴ Witte, A., "Hartmann von Aue und Kristian von Troyes", *Beiträge zur Geschichte der deutschen Sprache und Literatur*, liii, 65ff.

¹⁵ Drube, H., "Hartmann und Chrétien", *Forschungen zur deutschen Sprache und Dichtung* (2. Heft, Münster, 1931).

¹⁶ Drube, H., *op. cit.*, p. 10.

Drube believes that comparative appreciation can be given only when one considers the different artistic aims of the authors. Like Witte, Drube analyses the imagery, the depiction of the characters, the dramatic devices of tension, contrasts and climax, but, although he gives many new instances of these, he does not say anything which Witte had not said two years before him. He is more successful, however, when he turns to the drawing of characters. Hartmann does so according to the medieval tradition of portraying ideal types, whereas Chrétien's work shows unmistakeable signs of a more realistic style; Hartmann has a tendency to judge man by his moral qualities; thus Iwein's love for Laudine is based on her "staete güte", her "wîplîche triuwe" and her "senlîche riuwe". Her physical beauty, so well described by Chrétien, is only of secondary importance to Hartmann. Drube finds Hartmann's ideals best expressed in Gauvain's warning to Iwein shortly after the latter's marriage: the knight must not let himself be robbed of his *raison d'être*, he must not lose his enthusiasm through contact with the petty cares of everyday life. The knight must be always cheerful, upright and take great pride in his appearance. But these aesthetic values, must, of course, be supported by ethical ones: he must strive for "êre"—according to Hartmann, the essence of a knight's perfection. Drube finds Chrétien's characters motivated not so much by the desire for "êre" but by their feelings and emotions and thus they appear unbridled and lack moderation. Hartmann stresses propriety and self-discipline. These, then are the characteristics of Hartmann's character-drawing and, to my mind, Drube's most important contribution to Hartmann/Chrétien criticism; Putz and Witte had mentioned the different purposes of both authors but had not made much of it; Drube develops their material, works it out more explicitly and discerningly than did his predecessors.

The last critic I propose to mention is Kurt Halbach who in 1939 wrote on Hartmann and Chrétien in an article entitled *Französentum und Deutschtum in höfischer Dichtung des Staufenzeitalters*.¹⁷ The author's aim is to show that Yvain and Chrétien are Frenchmen and that Iwein and Hartmann are Germans, and from the formless mass of detail and complex style the following procedure seems to emerge: The contents

¹⁷ Halbach, K., *Französentum und Deutschtum in höfischer Dichtung des Staufenzeitalters* (Berlin, Junker und Dünhaupt, 1939).

of the two epics are discussed. Chrétien is concerned with portraying "Seele" and "Geist". With respect to the former Chrétien pervades his work with "Anmut", so much so that the story takes the form of a semi-comic idyll—characters being merely fairy-tale heroes and demons. Chrétien shows "Geist" as a teacher; he analyses the soul with typical Latin clarity of mind; he is a sceptic and this finds expression in his Gallic humour; he has an eye for reality and appreciates only earthly, physical beauty. He is a Frenchman. Hartmann, however, is more inclined to the romantic dream than to reality; his heroine is an angel, his hero shows all the virtuous qualities expected from ideal man, his villains are as shades hovering in the background. Instead of sensual beauty Hartmann stresses dignity. He would show ideal love between ideal knight and ideal lady. He lays stress on "Frauendienst", discipline, joy, stoicism, mystical belief, subjectivity and, above all, on propriety and "Mass". That, then, is the German. Halbach goes on to say that the character formation in Chrétien's work shows his "Anmut", refinement, frivolity and naivety, sensuousness and his direct, straightforward style. Hartmann writes a "sentimental" epic, in Schiller's sense of the word. He is possessed of "seelisch erfülltes Erzählertum" and his work, although essentially lyrical, is none the less monumental. Hartmann's characters are not sensuous, but rather thoughtful and sincere, as indeed is Hartmann himself, as may be seen in those passages of instructive moralising which Hartmann inserts at regular intervals. Hartmann, then, is a true German.

This forcing of the two epic poems into a pre-arranged scheme of nationalistic interpretation of French and German literatures, although partially answered by Baumann,¹⁸ has not been fully refuted. For since the appearance of Halbach's work fifteen years ago, no new critic has turned his attention to the relationship between Hartmann's *Iwein* and Chrétien's *Yvain*. It may be that time is ripe for a new comparative study of the two poems.

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¹⁸ See W. Baumann, article in *Romanische Forschungen*, liv, 90 ff.

NEOLINGUISTICA FROM GREAT BRITAIN

Entwistle, W. J., *Aspects of Language* (London, Faber and Faber, 1953).

Orr, J., *Words and Sounds in English and French* (Oxford, Blackwell, 1953).

The late Professor Entwistle's work was seen through the press by L. R. Palmer, Professor of Comparative Philology at Oxford. Here we have Entwistle's reflections on general theoretical problems in linguistics, distilled from his vast experience of languages. He tried to keep up the flow of new writing by linguists and philosophers on the topic of language. The latter remained for him more wonderful than linguistics. His search was for principles underlying expression as the greatest wonder within man's reach. Thus he expresses concisely and then illustrates one simple principle in the sentence:

The history of all languages that can be followed over a long period of time shows that voiceless occlusives become voiced, and voiced occlusives break down and provide affricates or fricatives. Sometimes this is caused by relaxation; more often by palatalization.

Spatially, Entwistle roams over the globe. It was axiomatic for him that anyone who would frame a syntax of our analytical speech must acquaint himself with Chinese, paragon of analytical languages. He must study large maps, like the four given by Entwistle, and then he will follow the latter's pointers to unsuspected relationships.

Aspects of Language scrutinizes horizons far beyond the accepted language families and their differential shapes. In the pursuit, the languages invoked include Arunta (a better brief scientific account of which it would be hard to find), Bantu, Aztec, Eskimo, Turkish, Russian, Basque, and scores of others. In particular, however, it should be added that Entwistle never forgets that literature and philology are but parts of the human record, the whole of which is History. Time and again he shows how ancient history is revealed, as in "The British-Roman *Eboracum* became the Anglo-Saxon *Eoforwic*, modified by the Northmen to *Jorvik*, whence *York*." Place-names are good ground for studying philological questions in the light of historical developments. Thus *London* shows an unexpected correspondence to the Latin locative *Londiniis*, whereas French

Londres, with dissimilation of *n*, retains the locative plural sign as *-es*.

As a vehicle of thought, language has fallen more and more under the scrutiny of philosophers, to whom, in any case, many linguistic terms were due. Neatly Entwistle defines the respective realms of philosopher and linguist. The linguist cannot deny any fact of language, but the philosopher is the enemy of the ascertained fact and questions realities which the linguist is bound to accept as linguistic routines. The philosopher may call for an ideal language, and argue that the indefinites of a speech set up tensions which break down when precise definition is attempted. In all this, Entwistle maintains, "the linguist is interested but incompetent, as he is also incompetent to determine whether universals give classes to particulars or particulars are generalized as universals."

Similar commonsense wisdom is scattered throughout *Aspects of Language*, witness the note on the bitterly-debated birth of language and the cogent summaries of factors of linguistic change, geographically illustrated, and shown to have varying resultants not always explicable phonetically, on a physical basis. Palatalization, velarization, labialization, accentuation (the main cause of diphthongization), speech economies and their contraries, increased tensions, imperfect imitation, conformity to utterance that has authority, the substratum theory of Wartburg and others, abrupt sound-substitution, attrition or phonetic erosion, sometimes producing homophony, and analogy, all are seen at work in a wide range of languages and dialects. But often there is a complexity of influences and Entwistle is nothing if not critical. He considers that the whole concept of analogy, as defined by the Neo-Grammarians, is too mechanical for the vagaries of living speech.

Entwistle, Orr and other pupils of the master, Gilliéron, gave to the concept of invariable law a new value:

Predict in conformity with strict sound-laws a given development; note that in fact the expected result has not occurred; and then seek to explain by all possible documentation just how the law has been frustrated. In such cases the law will be found embodied in some quite exceptional form. . . . Thus Latin *fide* is found correctly evolved in the Spanish exclamation *a la he*, which no one uses; why then *fe* "faith"? . . . When *fe* loses its *f* in *a la he* it ceases to be recognizable; there is a point at which phonetic loss has to be arrested in the interests of intelligibility.

The discovery of such "discrepancies" led to the emendation of Grimm's Law by Werner and Grassmann, and to some of Orr's homonymic or near-homonymic discoveries as set out in his *Words and Sounds in English and French*.

Among the structuralists and those whom Orr calls "linguisticians", Entwistle finds it difficult not to suspect that the ease of composition of terms has caused terminology to outrun thought. Significant units of sound, length, pitch, stress, grouping, order, word-formation, and meaning have become members of the -eme family: phoneme (good enough), chroneme, toneme, stroneme, tagmeme, taxeme, lexeme, and semanteme, all multiples of tones, chrones (!), etc. And I suppose soon the pseudo-mathematicians with their machines will predict the date and length of the next literary masterpiece.

Speech is directed to practical, historical and often ethical ends, and here Entwistle shows psychological insight. The absence of personal pronouns so frequent in the *Chanson de Roland* belongs to a state of mind which appreciates energetic statement above precision; Racine's basic vocabulary is connected with social manifestations, as was later the demand for greater lexical variety. The supremacy of the dialect of the Ile-de-France is connected not only with the geographical situation of Paris, but with the Capetians as symbols of French unity. Under Charles II, the English Royal Society demanded clear statements in simple prose. Indeed, Entwistle gives many instances to show how the characteristics of a language acquire interest when they are correlated with social and historical factors, but symptoms must be distinguished from causes. If speech serves a social purpose, it is proper to inquire what purposes have mostly been served. Thus philosophical, logical composition methods in French education may be part-symptom, part-cause in preserving the abstract and intellectual quality of the language in spite of myriad importations in vocabulary.

The use of geographical methods is related to a growing sense of dialectal information and throws light on conditions in the remotest past. Thus the law of continuous areas assures us that if *camp* (for *champ*) is spoken in Normandy-Picardy, in South-Western France and the Alpes Maritimes, there was a time when these areas were joined over the whole of Gaul – a fact confirmed by the Latin origin of French. The best linguistic maps have drawings or photographs to show exactly what a word denotes. The value of linguistic geography as a corrective to etymology

is excellently demonstrated by Orr's discussion of *ruban* and *ribbon*, the accompanying map being that for "shavings", *Copeaux de rabot* (ALF.319). French *cha-* for Latin *ca-* is seen to vary spatially with different words (*champ*, *chanter*, *chandelle*). Perhaps the most startling discovery in either Entwistle or John Orr is the latter's concerning $F > H$; the transformation of Latin *f* into aspirate *h* is, on the basis of numerous French place-names, seen to be as much Romance, even dialectal Latin, as Castilian, and that much earlier.

Entwistle's comments are always enlightening. For him, morphology is a hybrid, not a universal grammar; a phoneme has an inescapable subjective element; he sheds new light on the search for Indo-European etymons, as on the primitive vowels; shows the effects of French *-a* losses; discusses sentence-types in the Jespersen manner and aspect like Gray and Bloomfield. There is vast essential recent information on many languages, grouped Australia, America, Amerasia, Asia Ulterior and Oceania, Eurasia, Afrasia and Africa, beautifully documented from researchers on the spot. Well-known procedures, like agglutination and agglomeration, are distinguished; many affiliations are noted, but the conclusion is that no one language is pure in one type, in spite of a remarkable uniformity of linguistic type in broad geographical areas. The remote possibility of the original unity of human speech; the spread of languages; their characteristic features (Arunta, for example, knows nothing of abstraction or personality); the existence of non-complex primitive languages in addition to our common concept of some holophrastic, polysynthetic types; the Melanesian prediction for gemination; the importance of the deciphering of Hittite—all and more come within Entwistle's range.

Nor is the new linguistic discipline, stylistics, overlooked, although it is still in search of a method. The unstable nature of vocabulary, due to metaphor, shifts of meaning, borrowing and other causes, is part of the life of words. It is probably erroneous to reduce all the meanings of a word to one dominant ("The meaning of a word is the sum of its contexts").

Probably the most dogmatic statements in Entwistle are these:

The modern science of etymology is a strict analytical discipline designed to reveal the oldest possible forms of words and the tree of their genealogy. . . . This science is the basis of all sound historical linguistics, since it establishes sure equations and refutes false or "popular" etymology.

Science has its dogmas and how brilliantly Entwistle and, perhaps even more so, John Orr, confess to a fascination in seeing how language, at once an organism and a mechanism, works or functions.

I have here and there anticipated Professor Orr's book, a collection of 24 studies in essay form. Viewing language as human activity, complex, purposeful and gratuitous, fumbling and ingenious, practical and playful, serious and whimsical, he has sought to leave "the quiet and stale atmosphere of the study for the open air of the countryside . . . the perplexing and entrancing variety of dialect." This great specialist in Gallo-Roman and other Romance dialects also delights in his native tongue, whilst his lively, often quaintly satirical style brings his point home even to non-specialist and beginner. The writer sets out to convince the learner of the variety of linguistic types by encouraging him to compare languages he knows and to show what is common to them. Orr does so in the comparison of English and French prompted by Dauzat's *Le Génie de la langue française*, a masterly comparison which should be in the hands of every Australian or British University student of French – quite early in the course.

Dauzat was true to the long tradition among French grammarians of appreciating "values", and of making comparisons pan out almost invariably in favour of French. Orr's evidence, objectively and humorously collected from historical and present-day sources, must be set against subjective appreciations. Already in 1660, James Howell had noticed the "concatenation" of syllables of French, "so that sometimes a whole sentence is made in a manner but one word." This feature, together with the greater oratorical character of French, its greater intellectuality and preference for abstract expression, sharply distinguishes it from English ("The greater autonomy of the English individual word, which enables us by stress or by tone to throw into relief elements which, normally, are semantically insignificant, is in sharp contrast with the prevailing economy of the French sentence, in which, characteristically, the particular is merged in the general.")

The author's illustrations of the trend towards intellectuality and abstraction are cogent and, moreover, helpful to composers of French proses. The genius of the language is largely a matter of tradition and training: French is more static than English, yet for some purposes it does not possess the same wealth of

vocabulary nor the same dynamic effectiveness, in spite of numerous recent word-invasions which might have been mentioned. Moreover, as Professor Harmer reminded me, there are many illogical French constructions.

The amusing opening piece, *The Flea and the Fly*, is not a fable, but an attempt to solve, on the basis of a sound-and-sense synthesis, a problem of English vocabulary that shows how linguistic vagaries may reflect the prejudices of the community which it serves. Rightly, C. A. Robson sees the starting-point of it all in "the homonymy of *flee* and *flea* in favour of *fly* and *fleet* ('Time flies', 'Fleeting time')". It seems to me that such a sound-sense synthesis is also a *sine qua non* of all scientific etymology.

It may seem that here and there Professor Orr overworks homonymy, of which M. Canart of Melbourne recently gave us some of the classical and several new examples that would interest a wider circle of philologists. Homonymic clashes and word-blending are brilliantly traced in some of Orr's essays, although some other linguists oppose him on the oft-discussed *aimer*: *e(s)mer* (<*aestimare*) relationship, as on the new suggestion that *par coeur* is from *par chœur*. There can be no doubt as to fusions like *ester* and *estre*, *dont* and *d'où*, *essayer* and *essuyer*, and, to my mind, that of *autrement* and *outrement*, whilst the discussion on *Autre*, *Outre* . . . *et Foutre* will surely become classic.

Some of the studies must rank as permanent contributions to Romance linguistics. One is the etymology of *ruban*, *ribbon*, settled on the basis of dialect geography; the other deals with the sound-change of *f* > *h* in Gascon and Castilian. We now see this change also attested in many Norman-Picard place-names (for example, *Hinges* = *Fines*; *Housse-magne* in the Eure = *Fosse-magne* in the Dordogne). Again a model empirical approach opening up a valuable line of inquiry. Perhaps, as Orr suggests in conclusion, too much stress has been laid on ethnic factors of phonetic changes, such as *f* > *h* and *u* > *ü*; in the context of phonemic values, they often seem the natural outcome of the potentialities within the system of spoken Latin itself.

Science is the organized attempt of mankind to discover how things work as causal systems. Professor Orr is a scientist in the field of language, a scientist with the grace of humour.

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